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NEW
COLUMNS
FOR SEGA GENESIS
TURBOGRAFX-16!

GAME

Players

THE LEADING MAGAZINE OF VIDEO AND COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

December 1989

9 NEW
GENESIS
GAMES!

EYAAH!
TEENAGE MUTANT
NINJA
TURTLES!

REVIEWS:

MONSTER PARTY
DRAGON
WARRIOR
CLASH AT
DEMONHEAD
JOHN MADDEN
FOOTBALL
SWORD
OF ARAGON

PLUS:
WHERE IN TIME
IS CARMEN
SANDIEGO?



SEGA GENESIS
RAMBO III



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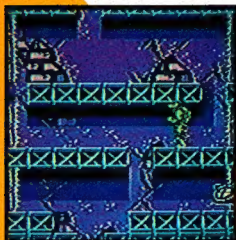
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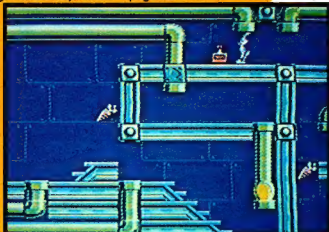
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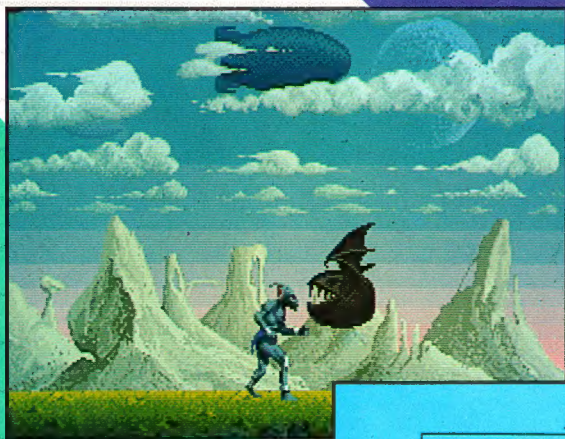
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The EDITORS VIEW

You'll notice some new features in this issue of *Game Player's* — the first of several improvements we'll be adding to the magazine over the next few months.

First, this issue marks the debut of two new columns: "Sega Players" and "Turbo Players." The Sega Players column includes monthly coverage of the Sega Genesis, which began appearing in stores in late August. And the Turbo Players column begins monthly coverage of NEC's TurboGrafx-16, which went on sale in September.

Regular readers know that we've already been covering both of these new 16-bit game systems on a monthly basis for the past few issues. But until now, neither machine has had a column of its own in *Game Player's*. We've decided that these exciting new game machines have so much promise and potential that it's worth devoting space to them in every issue.

Sega Players is actually an expanded version of the previous Sega Masters column. We'll be writing about both Sega game machines in Sega Players, so whether you have a Genesis or a Master System, you'll find something of interest.

In addition to the new columns, we'll be evaluating new Genesis and TurboGrafx games in our review section as well.

You'll also notice more timely coverage of the game market in general in the months to come. We've established a new bureau in California's Silicon Valley, the heartland of the computer and videogame industries. And we've added a correspondent in Great Britain who will keep you up to date on what's happening throughout Europe, and how these developments might affect us here in the U.S.

Genesis Vs. TurboGrafx

Recently I was talking with one of our readers who's an avid Nintendo fan. "While I've got you on the phone," he said, "let me ask you a straight question. What do you really think about the NEC TurboGrafx-16 and the Sega Genesis? I'm thinking about buying one or the other, but I haven't decided which one to get. Which one do you think is best?"

Those are the kinds of questions editors dread. When I was editor of a personal computer magazine, people were always asking me which computer they should buy. It's nearly impossible to give an honest answer without sounding like you're hedging. In the first place, there are journalistic ethics to consider — endorsing one product or another isn't the best way to maintain objectivity. Then, too, giving advice has its risks. What if people took my advice and bought something they weren't happy with? Would they think I steered them wrong? Or worse, cancel their subscriptions?

But the main reason why those questions are so difficult to answer is that it's hard to figure out what other people really need or want.

Do improved sound and graphics make a difference to you? If not, maybe you should stick with what you've got. Are there certain game titles you want to play? Maybe that will determine which system you need.

My straight answer to the reader who asked me the straight question about the TurboGrafx and Genesis: It's simply too early to tell which system is best. Both are very good, but it's unwise to judge a game system by the first games released. As time goes by, the games get better. Designers gradually learn how to squeeze more out of the new technology, while the general level of game quality increases as well. If everyone had judged the Nintendo system by its first titles back in 1985, today Nintendo would perhaps be a household word in only a dozen households.

Since we're covering both systems and all the new games, the story will gradually unfold right here in the pages of *Game Player's*. Our goal is to provide you with all the timely information you'll need to draw your own conclusions.

Tom R. Halfhill,
Editor-in-Chief

GP

龍載双

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Games

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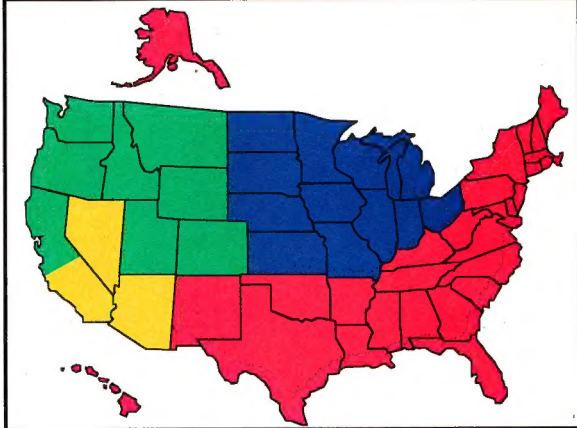
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8 WONDERS OF THE RACING WORLD

1.

THE HUMPH BACK.

Lots of little bumps that take their toll. Chassis damage adds up quickly.



2.

THE LITTLE RAMP.

Looks easy enough. The ramp isn't too big. But everyone wants to clear it full speed. They end up kissing dirt 100 feet down.



3.

THE STEPPING STONES.

Speed control is the name of the game — not too fast, not too slow. You'll have to clear four chasms, one after the other.



4.

THE BIG RAMP.

Build up speed for that ramp, but be ready for the landing. It'll rattle your molars. Your chassis can fall apart quickly on this one.



5.

THE HIGH JUMP.

Clearing the ramp is easy. Making it over that monstrosity in the middle is another story.



6.

THE ROLLERCOASTER.

The ride is silky smooth until you hit that slight dip in the road — all 500 feet of it.



7.

THE SKI JUMP.

For elite racers only. Handle this course right, and you're a legend. One small mistake, you're in orbit.



8.

THE DRAWBRIDGE.

This one moves. Catching the drawbridge at the right angle requires perfect timing. Better get it right. Second chances are for the living.

They're the meanest speedways ever designed. Like rollercoasters from Hell, they twist and climb through empty space without tracks to guide your wheels. Or guard rails to save your neck. In some sections, they don't even have roadway to carry your weight.

Your super-charged car is like a plane without wings. You have only momentum — the perfect combination of speed and steering — to carry you safely across gaping holes in the track. Airborne,



you hold on, only hoping that all four tires find the track again — and that the jolt won't be too much for you and your car to handle.

Fast-scrolling screens are so vivid they do everything but blow wind in your face. When the track rises and drops sharply away, the illusion of weightlessness runs straight to your gut. On hairpin turns, you'll find yourself leaning in your chair.

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Pick A Fight

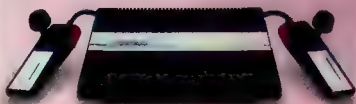


After School



After a hard day at school, have you ever just wanted to go home and break a few heads? Destroy a couple cities? Or just blow up the universe?

Of course you have. And now you can without getting grounded. Plug in one of these smash arcade hits on the incredible Atari® 7800™



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ATARI® 7800™

Winners don't use drugs.



Continuing Simon's Quest

How do you get across Yuba Lake in *Castlevania II: Simon's Quest* for Nintendo?

**Jeffrey S. Foutly
Pennsylvania**

Kneel at the edge of Yuba Lake. If you're holding a blue crystal and a silver knife, a passageway under the water will appear. Follow the path to the bottom of the lake and beyond to Rover Mansion.

By the way, Game Player's published a complete map to Castlevania II: Simon's Quest with lots of hints and tips in our Vol. 1, No. 2 issue.

Sega Master Altered Beast

Here are some helpful hints for *Altered Beast* for the Sega Master System. Instead of just pressing button 1 to start, hold the directional pad to the upper left and then press button 1. You'll start with extra power.

It says in the instruction manual that you can continue a game once by pressing upper left and holding down both buttons. But to continue a second time, press lower left and both buttons. To continue a third time, press lower right and both buttons. And to continue a fourth time, press upper right and both buttons.

**Paul Evers
Ontario, Canada**

Thanks for the tips!



(Do you have any questions about your favorite video games or computer games? Write to: The Editor, Game Player's, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429. Due to the volume of mail received, we regret that we cannot reply individually by mail to game questions.)

Stuck On Maniac Mansion And Alien Mindbenders

I have been trying and trying to get hints and tips for *Maniac Mansion* and *Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders*. In *Maniac Mansion*, how do you fix the stairs? And in *Zak McKracken*, where is the yellow crystal?

**Ben Graef
Ohio**

In Maniac Mansion, don't be tricked by the staircase in the library. It can't be fixed because it doesn't lead any-

where. The only things you need to do in the library are grab the blank cassette tape and use the telephone. That you have to fix. Bernard and Jeff are your handymen, but even they need tools. Check the garage.

The yellow teleport crystal in Zak McKracken is split into two shards. You must find them both before they'll fuse into the finished crystal. The first shard is in the back room of the Society for Ancient Wisdom. The other shard is in the Mayan crystal chamber. You have to draw the design from the Great Chamber to release the shard. But don't forget — even if you have the crystal, you must still be trained before you can use it.

Where's Rollerball ?

I have seen the reviews for *Rollerball* in your magazine for months. It looks like a terrific game. Now please tell me where I can find it. I've been looking everywhere for the last six months. If it isn't available, why have you been reviewing it for so long?

**Brigitte Cassell
Massachusetts**

Rollerball was one of several games developed by Hal America, a company that makes videogames for Nintendo systems. Unfortunately for pinball fans, Hal America is concentrating on several of its other titles, such as Air Fortress and The Adventures of Lolo. Keep your fingers crossed that Rollerball will follow soon.

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The Power Glove™. You plug it in like any joystick. But the similarity stops there. Because now you don't just guide the action. You're in the action.

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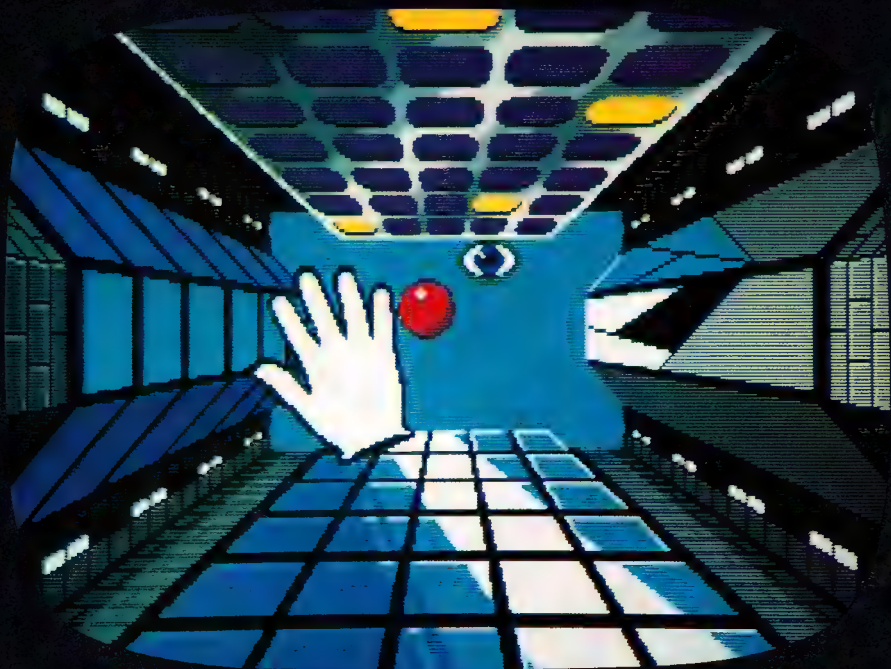
PLAY.

NES™ players moves they've never had before—and never will have with a joystick. Twist your wrist for an immediate head butt in Double Dragon. Bend a finger for “Thrash Mode”—your character turns and shoots in all possible directions. Bend another for “One-Shot

Turnaround”: you automatically change direction and fire faster than you ever could with a joystick.

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Look for the Power Glove in the movie



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Magic Containers In Zelda II

I recently purchased *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link*, but I can't find the three magic containers. Could you please direct me to them?

Danny Smith
Nebraska

One magic container is hidden in a cave. When you get to Midoro Palace, you'll notice the cave on the other side of the mountains. You can reach it easily from North Castle.

A second container is in Death Mountain. After you find the hammer, go back outside and use it to break the rock you see. Then go down to retrieve the magic container.

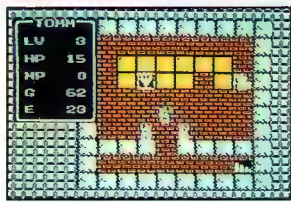
The third container is in the town of New Kasuto. You need to use your hammer to clear the woods north of Three-Eye Rock to uncover the hidden city.

For additional hints, refer to our Vol. 1, No. 3 issue, in which we published a complete guide to *Zelda II*.

Hints For Dragon Warrior

I just purchased *Dragon Warrior*, and it was too easy. I timed myself when playing it, and it only took me 16 hours to beat it. Some people I know can't beat it, so here are a few hints.

The princess is in the same cave you use to get Rimuldar (on the other island), but a tough green dragon guards her, so be



In *Dragon Warrior*, return to Tantagel Castle fairly often for visits with King Lorik XVI. This gives you a chance to save your game.

strong before you attempt a rescue.

The sunlight stones can be found on the right side of Tantagel castle. Go one more space right than you usually would, and go down. Then you'll see the cellar.

Erdrick's armor can be found in Hauwness (the town that was destroyed). It's to the right in a patch of woods guarded by a knight with an ax.

Erdrick's sword is in Charlock. It is important, but the Dragonlord can be beaten without it.

And you'll need the rainbow drop to make a bridge if you want to get to Charlock. You can get it from a guy on the south island if you have the staff of rain and the sunlight stones.

Bruce Carey
Indiana

Thanks for the tips! We also found it's easiest to beat the dragon if you use a sleep spell on him first. Then you can attack him without risking your own strength.

Continuing Altered Beast And Super Thunderblade

I need some help with *Altered Beast* on the Sega Genesis. The instruction booklet says that if you want to continue when you die, you should press the A, B, and C buttons at the same time and a continue message will appear. I can't get it to work. Can you give me the correct code?

Also, I was wondering if there was a code to start on different levels of *Super Thunderblade* on the Genesis.

Jason Branton
Ontario, Canada

To continue *Altered Beast*, just hold the A button and press Start when the title screen appears.

There aren't any codes that we know of for *Super Thunderblade*, but we do have a hint that should help you play the game. If you set the difficulty on Hard and stay in the upper left corner, no bullets will be able to reach you!

GP



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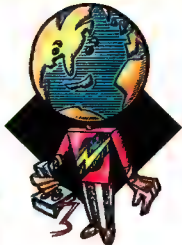
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FOR KIDS!

PLAYERS

WORLD



FACE TO FACE ...WITH DAVID FAUSTINO

Jason R. Rich

For three years, David Faustino has been portraying Bud Bundy on the Fox Television Network's hit series *Married With Children*. While 16-year-old David enjoys acting, he also gets a kick out of playing Nintendo videogames.

"I have had my Nintendo for about a year," he says. "I own about 20 different cartridges. *Super Mario Bros.* is one of my favorite games, even though a lot of my friends have gotten sick of it. *Double Dragon* is my other favorite game. I'm not really that good at playing videogames, but I love playing them."

Many Nintendo players favor the latest hit titles, but David has other priorities when he goes shopping for a new game. "*Punch-Out* and *Top Gun* are fun. A lot of the games I like, other people might not like anymore because they have gotten old," he says. "When I am looking for a new cartridge, I look for games with excellent graphics. Unfortunately, it is usually the most expensive games that have the best graphics."

David says he often allows his younger brother to choose new cartridges. "He plays several hours every day. I usually play Nintendo

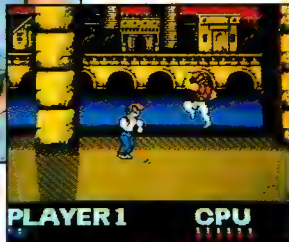


when I get home from work. I'll lie in bed and play for an hour right before I go to sleep. Sometimes I'll play in the morning."

Although David maintains that he's not an expert player, there is one game at which he excels. "The game I am the best at is *Double Dragon*. You know in the beginning when the bad guys come and take the girl? I pretend that the girl is my real-life girlfriend, and I have to rescue her. That allows me to



Top Gun is another of David's favorites. He prefers videogames with good graphics, even if they aren't the latest releases.



Double Dragon is one of David's favorite Nintendo games. He likes to pretend that the kidnapped girl in the game is his real-life girlfriend.

get through the game pretty quickly."

Most of the day, of course, David is working on the set of *Married With Children*, his first major role. "I have been acting since I was 5. On *Married With Children*, my character is nothing like I really am. I think the show is very funny. It's pure entertainment. There are no lessons to learn — you just laugh."

The biggest thrill of his acting career was getting his photo on the cover of *TV Guide*, says David. "If I were not acting, I don't know what else I would be doing. I guess I would be just another kid going to high school. I love acting."

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There's havoc in the factory as you blast away the invaders.

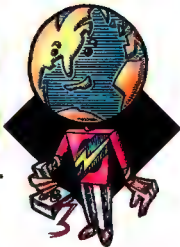


The Bronze Dragon is a formidable foe. You never know when it will strike!

CAPCOM
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PLAYERS

WORLD



VIDEOGAMING IN THE U.K.

Tom R. Halfhill

Imagine a world where Nintendo was almost non-existent...where you didn't have to wait for the Sega Genesis or NEC TurboGrafx-16, because you'd already

been playing 16-bit games for years...a world where IBM PC compatibles played a minor role in the computer game market.

Far-fetched fantasy? Nope. It's Great Britain.

Americans tend to have a myopic view of the world, believing that all high-tech trends originate in the U.S. and gradually spread elsewhere. But in the world of video and computer games, important developments frequently emerge from such places as Europe and Japan and don't reach the U.S. until at least a year later. Most Nintendo fans are aware, for instance, that blockbuster games almost always debut in Japan. Titles such as *Super Mario Bros. 3* which have been available in the Far East for many months still haven't reached U.S. shores.

In the U.K., the situation is a little different. In some ways, video and computer gaming in Britain is ahead of the game market in the U.S., and in other ways it's behind.

Nintendo Who?

Take Nintendo, for example. In the U.S., Nintendo is far and away the leading home videogame for-



R-Type I is typical of the Japanese PC-Engine games sold on the "gray market" in the U.K. The American version for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 is slightly different.

mat. There are nearly 18 million Nintendo systems in American homes, accounting for about half of all American households with children.

In the U.K., however, Nintendo systems are about as common as palm trees. One British magazine writer estimates there are less than 10,000 Nintendo machines in all of Britain.

Why is Nintendo so unpopular? First, Nintendo apparently hasn't tried very hard to establish itself in the U.K. British Nintendo players complain that only about 20 games are available and that the titles are old. Britain is just now getting such games as *Super Mario Bros. 2* and the original *Mega Man*.

On the other hand, the Sega Master System is very much in evidence — exactly the reverse of the situation in the U.S. And Sega's



There aren't any magazines about Nintendo in the U.K., but the Sega Master System is so popular that it recently spawned this Sega-only magazine.

BAD TO THE BONE

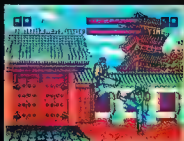
These are the streets. And there are no rules when you do battle here.

STREETFIGHTER is strictly survival of the fittest against 8 of the baddest dudes from around the world. Watch out for flying scissor kicks, lethal Ninja weapons, and other evil tricks. Block their attacks while you counter with jabs and roundhouse kicks. Don't drop your guard cause these guys aren't just b-b-b-b-bad. They're "Bad to the Bone."

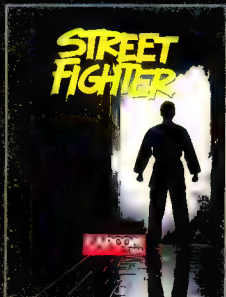
So see your favorite software retailer or call Capcom U.S.A. 408-727-1665. You don't want to keep these guys waiting!



Try a roundhouse kick against an English street tough.



Dodge the lethal Ninja weapons of Geki.



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titles in Britain seem to be as current as those released here.

Another factor working against Nintendo is that dedicated videogame machines — or “consoles,” as the British call them — generally aren’t as popular in the U.K. as they are in the U.S. Instead, British gamers prefer to play games on personal computers. This is partly because most personal computers in Britain offer outstanding graphics and sound capabilities.

But another reason, voiced by several people we talked to, is that disk-based games for computers are much easier to illegally copy than cartridge-based games for consoles (although one device makes it possible to copy Nintendo cartridges onto cassette tapes). One writer says that software piracy is “rampant” in the U.K. He guessed that for every legal copy of a game that’s sold, at least ten illegal copies are distributed. “Lots of people won’t buy a system if they can’t copy the games,” he admitted. It’s difficult to judge, though, whether software piracy is any more widespread in the U.K. than in the U.S.

PCs: All Work And No Play

Personal computers are very popular in the U.K., but the market is quite different from the U.S. IBM PC compatibles, which dominate the personal computer market in America, are more strictly relegated to business applications in the U.K. In British homes, you’re more likely to find such computers as the Commodore Amiga,

Commodore 64/128, Atari ST, Sinclair ZX Spectrum, Acorn, and BBC Computer.

The Amiga and ST, relatively minor factors in the U.S. market, are particularly favored by British game players. This is largely because both machines offer 16-bit technology at reasonable prices. They seem to be running neck-and-neck in sales, and retail prices are comparable to those in the U.S. Atari even sells a special package that includes a 520ST computer and nearly two dozen games for 399 pounds sterling (about \$640). To match the capabilities of an ST or Amiga in a PC-compatible system, a British game player would have to buy a fast AT-class computer, an EGA or VGA graphics card, a game controller card, and a special sound board — altogether, about triple the price of an Amiga or ST.

In this respect, the game mar-

ket in the U.K. is ahead of the U.S. British game players have been using 16-bit computers for years, while American gamers are only now beginning to buy 16-bit game machines like the Sega Genesis and NEC TurboGrafx-16.

Both of those advanced videogame systems, incidentally, have been widely available in the U.K. for about a year, even though neither machine has officially been introduced there. Without the blessings of Sega or NEC, entrepreneurs are importing Sega Mega Drives and NEC PC-Engines — Japanese versions of the Genesis and TurboGrafx, respectively — and are converting them to operate with British TV sets and 220-volt power. There seems to be plenty of demand for these “gray market” systems, even though prices are high.

In London, for example, PC-Engines are commonly priced at



British software publishers like Psygnosis are successfully penetrating the American market. *Shadow of the Beast*, a new Psygnosis title for the Amiga, boasts some of the best graphics ever seen in a computer game.

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Two-screen shot.



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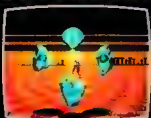
Sega Arcade Classics



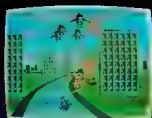
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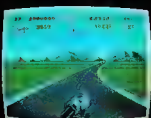
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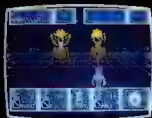
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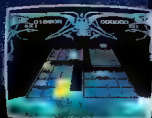
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Blade™



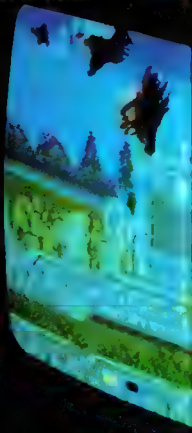
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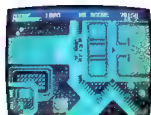
Genesis brings games alive with vivid high-definition graphics. Voices, sounds and music so true they turn the game into a reality you can feel. Plug in a pair of headphones for stereo sound that surrounds you. And soon, with the TeleGenesis™ modem, you'll be able to play against friends in other cities. Or across town.

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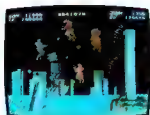
The power has been unleashed. The adventure begins. And this is just the beginning of the Genesis era. There's more to come.



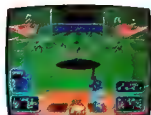
Unretouched Photo
Altered Beast, the Sega arcade hit, comes with the Genesis system, TeleGenesis™ Modem, Power Base Converter™ and other games sold separately.



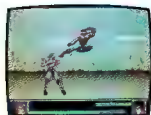
Thunder Force II™



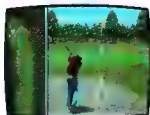
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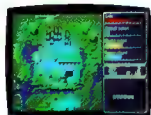
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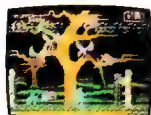
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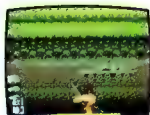
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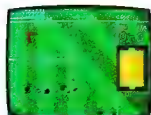
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PLAYERS

WORLD

180 to 190 pounds (about \$290-\$300), and games sell for 30 pounds each (\$48). Since the games are imported directly from Japan, many titles are available in the U.K. before they reach the U.S. Titles commonly available in London last fall included *Break In*, *Galaga '88*, *Pac-Land*, *Dungeon Explorer*, *The Drunken Master* (renamed *China Warrior* for the U.S. market), *Space Harrier*, *Vigilante*, *Final Lap Twin*, and *R-Type I*.

Mutual Lend-Lease

Computer games are a mixed bag. Most of the best computer games produced in the U.S. are widely available in Britain, because the major American software publishers either have overseas operations or cooperative distribution agreements with British software publishers. In return for distributing U.S. software in the U.K., the British companies provide games for distribution in the U.S.

Most British computer games never make it to the U.S., however. Sometimes it's because the British publisher has no U.S. distribution arrangement, but, more often, the games aren't deemed suitable for the American market. British gamers prefer more arcade-style action than is currently popular in the U.S., and their games are usually written for computers with relatively small followings here.

Interestingly, though, the British sometimes get American computer games before Americans do. For example, MicroProse — a Maryland-based publisher — recently released *M1 Tank Platoon* and *Starlord* in the U.K. several

weeks before they hit U.S. stores. MicroProse President Bill Stealey says the U.K. market is becoming increasingly important, now accounting for one-third of MicroProse's total sales.

Likewise, some British software companies are pushing harder to tap into the lucrative American market. One of the most successful is Psygnosis, which works directly with a Chicago-based U.S. distributor (Computer Software Services) instead of distributing through a competitive

U.S. publisher. The most recent titles from Psygnosis — particularly the Amiga versions of *Blood Money* and *Shadow of the Beast* — prove that British software companies can compete successfully in the U.S.

Since British companies are now exploring the possibility of translating their computer titles to the new 16-bit home videogame systems, we can expect to see even more video and computer games from the U.K. in the years to come.

LAYOFFS AT EPYX

Epyx, a major publisher of entertainment software since the early days of personal computing, recently laid off almost its entire work force. About 80 employees in Redwood City, California, lost their jobs, leaving fewer than two dozen people at the company.

"Just about the only ones left are a few management personnel and some Handy programmers," said a former Epyx project manager. "Handy" is the Epyx code word for the hand-held game machine with full-color screen that it developed over the past three years. In a deal worked out last summer, the Handy is being manufactured and marketed by Atari Corp. under the name Lynx.

It's still unclear how game players will be affected by the troubles at Epyx. There are indications that Epyx may switch its focus and develop software for other companies instead of publishing software itself. The titles Epyx planned to release late this year and early in 1990 are in limbo, but some may be acquired and released by other software publishers.

Despite the layoffs, Epyx is carrying through its commitment to produce eight games for the Lynx, according to Atari spokesman Andy Marken. Six of the games were scheduled to be released when the Lynx hit the stores late this year, and the others are to follow soon afterward.

Although Epyx is the major software supporter of the Lynx, Marken says the future of the hand-held system won't be jeopardized by the layoffs. "We already have 35 other developers [for the Lynx]," he said.

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Shadowgate is the hottest fantasy adventure ever plugged into a Nintendo Entertainment System®. Like some of the best interactive PC games, *Shadowgate* has multiple screens of text and graphics, plus animation and sound effects. A unique "save game" function lets you continue a "lost" game without starting over.

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Desert Commander is the ultimate war strategy game. With all deployment options, and infantry, artillery, and aircraft firepower completely variable, *Desert Commander* takes the best from tactics-oriented board games and couples it with the speed and versatility of a computer.

To begin, you and your opponent determine the firepower of each army component. Both sides carefully establish their offensive and defensive positions — then, boom, bang, pow! But remember, to win, your strategies should be brilliant; your tactics flawless.

Leave the Kid Stuff Behind.

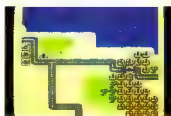
If you're ready to leave the kid stuff to your little brother and get into something more interesting, more challenging, get into Kemco Seika's *Shadowgate* and *Desert Commander*. Because hey — you don't have to be big to think big.

KEMCO▲SEIKA

Being treated like a little kid can be a real drag. Grown-ups always telling you what to do. What to think. Like you haven't one intelligent thought of your own. Okay. So you have a few more years to grow. Doesn't mean your only interest is zapping aliens all day, running up the highest score. Sure, there was a time when you enjoyed playing simple video games designed for children. But you're older now. Smarter. You want something more. Something like a challenge. A grown-up challenge. A challenge that tests your mind, not just your wrist. Well, check out *Shadowgate*™ and *Desert Commander*™ by Kemco Seika.

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Sure. It can be pretty embarrassing. Everyone else is finally asleep. You quietly slip out of bed, tip-toe into the family room and gently insert the awaiting cartridge. When just as you're about to zap your zillionth alien onto another astral plane—flash!—the lights go on . . . You're busted. Caught red-handed and red-faced, playing yet another juvenile, one-dimensional video game.

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Shadowgate is the most engaging, object-oriented, interactive graphic adventure you've ever seen on a Nintendo Entertainment System.®

Shadowgate features text and animation, multiple screens, participatory "mouse"-like controls and a special "save" function like those found in the finest PC games.

Desert Commander is the ultimate war strategy game that simulates realistic battle situations. With military component strengths and deployment options completely variable at five levels of combat complexity,

Desert Commander takes the

best from logistics and tactics-oriented board games and couples it with the power and versatility of a computer.

Come Out of the Closet.

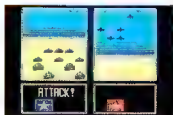
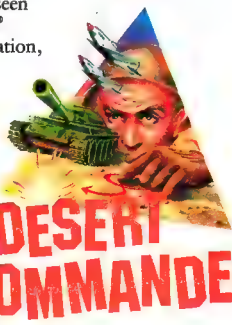
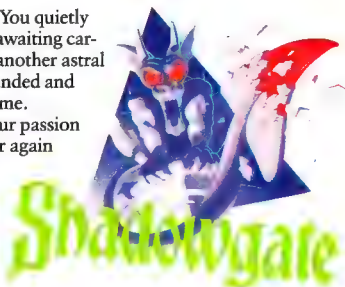
If you're a closet Nintendo fanatic playing behind closed doors, step out and step up to Kemco Seika's *Shadowgate* and *Desert Commander*.

Because hey—you don't have to be a kid to play.

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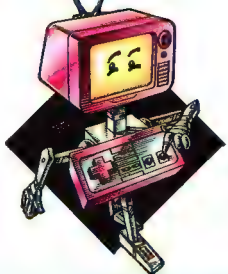
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The secret is out — some adults are spending almost as much time playing Nintendo as young people are.

They've been clamoring for games more advanced than the usual shoot-em-ups, and their cries are being answered. We're now seeing a steady stream of personal computer games translated for the Nintendo Entertainment System.



NINTENDO NEWS

COMPUTER GAMES COME HOME TO NINTENDO

Leslie Mizell

Norman — have their eyes on the throne. As one of the Saxon lords, you must prove your mettle by

1 There's a rhythm to sword fighting in *Defender of the Crown*, and once you learn it, your chances of winning increase significantly.

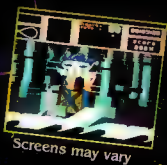
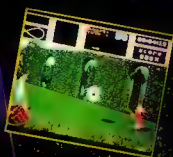
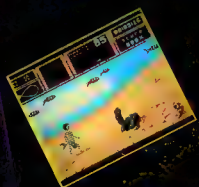
2 Don't hit your opponent's horse when jousting in *Defender of the Crown*. This cowardly act will get you banned from the tournaments in disgrace.

3 The main display screen in *Nobunaga's Ambition* shows the condition of your Japanese fiefdom and the basic commands you may issue.

4 Once you've entered battle in *Nobunaga's Ambition*, try to take advantage of favorable terrain. And always protect the daimyo's (lord's) own unit.

3		Summer Fief 2 Echigo		Menu
		Usagi	2500	1000
		Home Fief	2500	1000
		Gold	2500	1000
		Steel	2500	1000
		Iron	2500	1000
		Wood	2500	1000
		Food	2500	1000
		Water	2500	1000
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Earth	2500	1000		
Air	2500	1000		
Light	2500	1000		
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Thunder	2500	1000		
Earthquake	2500	1000		
Firestorm	2500	1000		
Waterfall	2500	1000		
Iceberg	2500	1000		
Volcano	2500	1000		
Storm	2500	1000		
Thunderstorm	2500	1000		
What mission	Market		0.7	
1-Uprising	2-Revolution	3-Elite	0.7	
4-Demons	4-Assassin	5-Elite	0.7	
6-Arson	7-Elite	8-Elite	0.7	
9-Arson	10-Elite	11-Elite	0.7	

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NINTENDO® GAME of the MONTH

In feudal Japan, one image struck fear into people unlike anything else — that of a man clad in black from head to toe. The ninjas were highly skilled fighters who wielded small arsenals of secret weapons and devices. Often, they offered their deadly services to feuding warlords, who were constantly locked in a struggle for supremacy. The cloak-and-dagger



ninjas adhered to a rigid code of honor modeled after Bushido, the way of the samurai warriors. "An eye for an eye" defined their way of life.

In *Ninja Gaiden*, the Hayabusa clan is one of the last remaining vestiges of the golden era of ninjitsu. Its elder, Hayabusa Ken, has just been killed in a duel, Ken's son,

Ryu, after reading a letter left to him by his father, embarks on a journey to America to find out what really happened.

NINJA GAIDEN



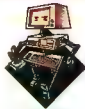
GAMEPLAYERS

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OCTOBER 1989

DON'T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE OF THE HOTTEST NEW MAGAZINE IN VIDEO AND COMPUTER GAMES!

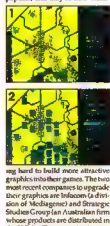
Thanks to falling prices and the proliferation of VGA, MCGA, and VGA video boards, PC compatibles are now capable of displaying much better graphics than the limited four-color CGA screens of yesteryear. Software publishers have been waiting a long time for these newer video boards to become popular, and they're now work-



PC PLAYERS

THE TREND TOWARD BETTER GRAPHICS

Neil Randall



ing hard to build more attractive graphics for their games. The two most recent companies to upgrade their graphics are Infocom and Strategic Studies Group (an Australian firm whose products are distributed in the U.S. by Electronic Arts).

Until recently both companies downplayed graphics. Infocom, of course, is famous for its text-only "interactive fiction" games, such as the *Zork* series and *Wings of Glory*. Infocom had maintained that graphics were unnecessary; they chose not to imagine them, and computers couldn't possibly match. After all, books are capable of creating pictures in our minds, and Infocom promoted its text games as interactive novels.

SSG's approach to graphics

was a bit different. *Lake Samnig* (Strategic Studies Group, Inc.) is the only published title that uses color, sound, and graphics.

1. The first image shows a character in a green field under a full moon. 2. The second image shows a close-up of a character's face with a mask. 3. The third image shows a character in a green field under a full moon. 4. The fourth image shows a character in a green field under a full moon.

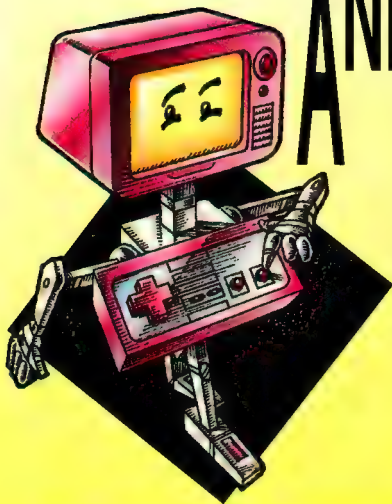
SSG concentrates on strategic war games, particularly the kind that involve large-scale battles. In the past, SSG focused on titles such as *D-Day*, *Paratrooper*, and *Napoleon at Waterloo*. The latest games consist of a battlefield map divided into a grid of hexagons. Armies are represented by small card-board markers which are moved around the map from hexagon to hexagon.

Since war games were among the first players of computer games, SSG decided to create the format of hexagons and square markers when it adapted these board games to computers. Unfortunately, the games lost a lot in the translation, mainly because of poor graphics. Looking at a full-color, 3.5-foot map spread out on a table was appealing, separating it a tiny part of that map into a low-resolution computer screen was not.

Furthermore, important details were lost. A lot can be going on within each hexagon of a war

game. Oh, wait, we mean these markers might be there, along with information about terrain, sight, and so forth. The four grids remained colors available with CGA graphics limited things separately, or did the difficulty of

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The holiday season is knocking, and even to be at the top of every Nintendo player's wish list is the Game Boy portable game machine. Reviewers and gamers alike are responding enthusiastically to the hand-held system, praising the attractiveness of its illustrations, the detail of its graphics, and the intense, startling quality of its screen images.



NINTENDO NEWS

NEW TITLES FOR NES, GAME BOY

William R. Reiter



temporarily when heard through the speakers.

And what makes a better shuffling machine than any of the new Game Boy cards released by Nintendo? Super Mario Kart—covered in our last issue—seems to push the hand-held format to its limits. But at least two of the other new titles also fit the Game Boy as comfortably as a favorite pair of slippers.

First, for example, works beautifully in the Game Boy, due in part to the scale and form of the machine. Our game reviewers found that by using various buttons and pad combinations, the animal players could do virtually anything a real tennis player does, from an aerial lob to a blistering forehand smash. The animation

playing field, but it does circumvent the necessary screen quite comfortably. And the small game card somehow packs in every option and sophisticated feature

found in the best full-sized Nintendo hand-held simulations. In the single-player mode, it was almost too easy to beat the computer, but the two-player video ball mode really shows off the game's full potential.

Highly entertaining graphics, too, but still quite expensive. In *Allegory*, this is yet another variation of the classic breakout game that was popular in arcades about a decade ago. Once again, you brush through various formations of blocks by creating a homing ball with a horizontally moving paddle. However, *Allegory* is more difficult to play than the original *Breakout*, largely because the homing ball is harder to use on the tiny LCD screen—especially



GAME PLAYERS

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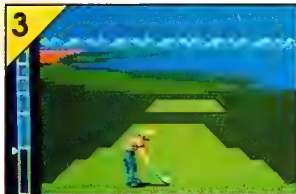
NINTENDO NEWS

Are You Ready, Sports Fans?

Sports games have been popular on Nintendo ever since the first days of *Golf* and *Baseball*. But two of the best sports simulations for personal computers have now been added to the Nintendo library.

A truly challenging golf game awaits those who pick up *Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf*. The "Golden Bear" himself chose the holes included in this game. To get started, select from two levels of difficulty and three locations for placing the tee. On your way to the green, you'll play around sand traps and water hazards. You must take into account the topography of the course and the wind direction and speed if you hope to lower your handicap.

If you like your sand on a beach



instead of in a bunker, try *Kings of the Beach*, where the only hazard you'll encounter is a sunburn. Although this game has comic elements (such as a bikini contest), it's an outstanding simulation of professional beach volleyball, complete with spikes, skyballs, and crushers. You can play with three friends, or — if you have the nerve and the skill — go against Sinjin Smith and Randy Stoklos, the *real* kings of the beach who were consulted during the design of this game.

Fantasy And Sci-Fi Adventure

There are scores of fantasy role-playing games for personal computers, yet only two have been translated for Nintendo. The first was *Ultima*, and it has already attracted quite a following. The second is *Shadowgate*.

Here's an example of a Nintendo translation that's even better than the original. The PC-compat-

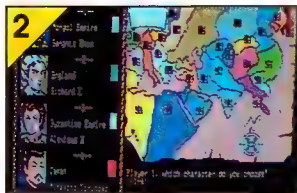
ible version of *Shadowgate* was severely hampered by its four-color CGA graphics screens. Thanks to Nintendo's superior graphics, the game is vastly improved.

Shadowgate's story line is the traditional stuff of fantasy. A warlock lord is trying to bring chaos to your land by raising a Titan named Behemoth from the center of the world. As the last in a line of great kings, you must enter the warlock's fortress, *Shadowgate*, and defeat Behemoth.

Shadowgate is a combination text-adventure and exploration game. A picture in the upper left corner of the screen shows what lies directly in front of you, while a text block down below describes the action. This screen also displays your inventory of possessions and a map of your position. The commands — such as Examine, Open, or Speak — are also readily available.

Science-fiction fans might prefer *Rocket Ranger*, graphically one of the finest personal computer games ever published. Little has been sacrificed to bring the game to Nintendo, and some of the movements and commands are easier with a Nintendo controller than with a computer keyboard or joystick.

Some things *have* been changed in the Nintendo version of *Rocket Ranger*, however. The adventure has been moved from pre-World War II to the year 1990. The bad guys are no longer Nazis, but rather are humanlike aliens who invade Poland, Germany, Austria, and Hungary. (What are the aliens after —



Romance of the Three Kingdoms is placed in China, but as in *Nobun's Ambition*, you still have to control the economy and the military.

You can choose to be one of four medieval leaders in *Genghis Khan*. If you wish, other people can play as the other leaders.

You'll be competing against the best in *Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf*.

The jump serve in *Kings of the Beach* has two things going for it — high velocity and a steep trajectory.



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NINTENDO NEWS

sausages?) They surround themselves with powerful force fields and learn to control human minds. It seems nothing can stop them from world domination.

Fortunately, you manage to get your hands on a rocket suit and a ray gun, vowing to destroy the invaders. But it's a race against time. You must locate five pieces of a rocket ship, construct it, and fly to the moon to stop the aliens from mining the ore they need for fuel.

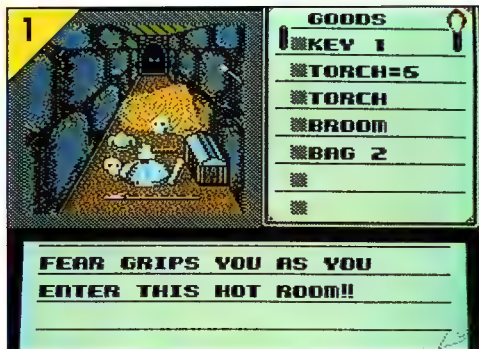
Enter The Danger Zone

Rescue: The Embassy Mission is a translation of the computer game *Hostage*. But the name is just about the only thing that's changed. It's still an intense simulation of an attempt to rescue a group of hostages held by terrorists in an embassy.

As the commander of an anti-terrorist strike force, you must develop a plan to infiltrate the embassy, then hunt down the terrorists. You can position snipers around the embassy to spot the terrorists and pick them off, if no hostages get in the way.

After your men are dropped onto the embassy roof by helicopter, they rappel down the side of the building and break through the windows. Once inside, team members can communicate with the snipers outside, but essentially, they're on their own.

If submarine warfare is more your style, try *Silent Service*. In this



1 Don't be surprised if you come across the bones of other knights in *Shadowgate*. This warlock isn't playing games.

2 Your final battle in *Shadowgate* is against Behemoth, the fierce Titan. You'll need all your strength and power just to survive.

3 You first encounter the aliens in *Rocket Ranger* on this zeppelin. Watch where you shoot—they have hostages on board.



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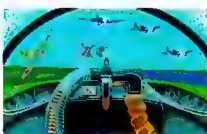
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breathe easier tomorrow. Who knows—you might even change history. And if you don't like the odds, *Their Finest Hour* lets you change sides.

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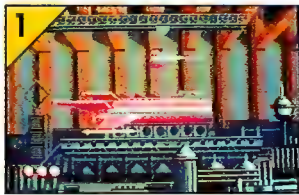
schmitt 109. Pulverize ground installations from your Messerschmitt 110 fighter/bomber or your screaming Stuka. Or fly as pilot, bombardier or gunner in a Junkers 88, Dornier Flying Pencil, or Heinkel Spade.

Your success in each mission impacts the next one: knock out a radar installation today, and you'll



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NINTENDO NEWS



simulation, you're a naval lieutenant who's just been assigned to a submarine stationed in the South Pacific during World War II.

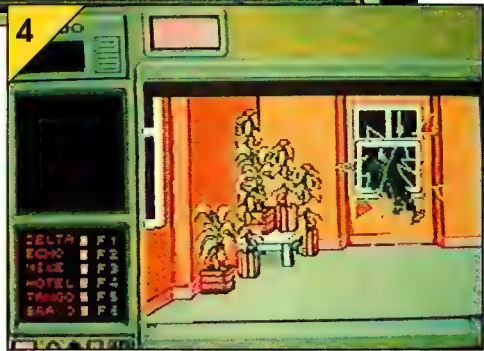
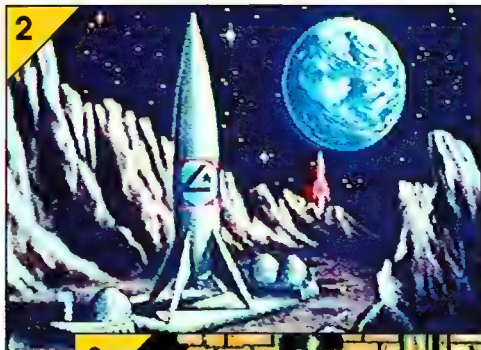
Things heat up quickly, and you end up leading missions off the coasts of China, the Philippines, and Japan. Your objective is obviously to destroy the enemy, but you must protect your submarine and crew as well. If you exhibit bravery and wisdom, you can work your way up the promotional ladder to the rank of submarine captain.

Three Times The Laughs

Are you looking for *nyucks* instead of bombs and bullets in your Nintendo games? Then take a look at *The Three Stooges*, a game featuring that trio of mayhem and madness.

Curly, Larry, and Moe are trying to save an orphanage from foreclosure by earning enough money to pay off the bank loan. They take on a series of odd jobs to earn extra cash, but they can also find money on the street, receive rewards for honesty, and win radiotrivia games.

The Stooges have 30 days to come up with the cash, and each event takes one day. Choose the



1 Even if you have all five rocket pieces in *Rocket Ranger*, you still need fuel.

2 A rocket to the moon is your last chance to stop the alien mining bases to steal some.

3 In *Rescue: The Embassy Mission*, position your sniper team first, but don't let them get caught in the terrorists' spotlight.

4 Don't bother to knock in *Rescue*. Just smash through the window, feet first. Rappelling is tricky but fun.

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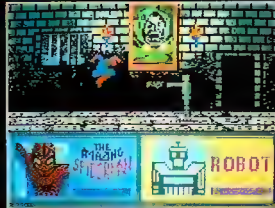
Arcade and Magneto's henchmen include Wendigo • Juggernaut • Nimrod • Toad • Mystique • Silver Samurai • White Queen.
Pyro • The Blob • Avalanche • Robot Sentinels.

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NINTENDO NEWS

1 Aboard your submarine in *Silent Service*, get your target in sight and prepare to fire torpedoes.

2 In *The Three Stooges*, Ma's orphanage will be foreclosed by Mr. Fleece, the banker, unless Curly, Larry, and Moe can help.

3 As hospital interns in *The Three Stooges*, follow right behind the doctor's gurney to reach the operating room and collect your paycheck.

4 Larry must find something else to play "Pop Goes the Weasel" when his violin breaks. That tune turns Curly into a maniac in the boxing ring.

event with a hand icon that darts back and forth across a series of squares resembling a board game. Each square represents a job, a contest, a windfall, or a mouse-trap. Catch three mousetraps, and the game is over; the orphans are out in the cold.

You can also find jobs as waiters, and end up in a pie-throwing fight. Or as hospital interns, racing through the corridors in midjet cars. Curly can enter an oyster-stew-eating contest, or get into a boxing ring with Killer Killduff. Many of the sequences in the game are taken from classic *Three Stooges* films.

Although the computer version has some animated sequences that didn't make it into the Nintendo game, *The Three Stooges* is still a lot of fun. There are so many different subgames that you don't have to master them all. If you have trouble with the pie fight, for example, just avoid landing on that square. Earn your money with the trivia game or the boxing contest instead.

These games represent the first batch of personal computer games available for Nintendo. Each one has more to offer than many Nintendo games in terms of plot, action, and graphics, and they should appeal to adults as well as younger players. Nintendo isn't just kid stuff anymore.

GP



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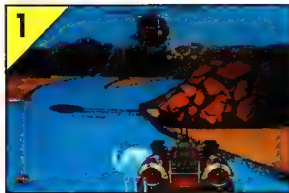
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So you're a seasoned veteran of the Arcade Wars and you're looking for something to relieve the boredom? You say that

Operation Wolf was a piece of cake? Well, soldier, you've got your wish. Fall in and prepare for Romstar's latest "special ops" mission — *Aqua Jack*!

Your assignment is to take control of your armed forces' most



powerful attack hovercraft, advance toward the hostile camp, and utterly destroy the enemy. As usual, you must also rescue anyone who needs rescuing and blow up everything that needs blowing up.

Aqua Jack is both fun and addictive. It's difficult enough to merit continued play, but not too difficult to be frustrating. In fact, if you've got the time and money, it's even possible to finish this game in one sitting. And *Aqua Jack* does have a definite ending — but more on that later.

1 In Romstar's *Aqua Jack*, you're in a hovercraft, cruising upriver and preparing to fight off an attacking flock of helicopter gunships.

2 These enemy commandos will try to block your path, but a few missiles and shots from your Vulcan cannon will set them straight.

3 Direct hit! Enemy soldiers tumble skyward as this hostile ship explodes in flames.

4 To knock this giant bomber out of the sky, try firing a missile straight at its tail.

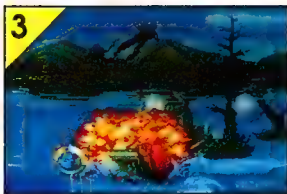


ARCADE ACTION

Aqua Jack And Final Lap

Scott Wolf

Those who remember Activision's classic computer game *River Raid* will feel at home with *Aqua Jack*. Looking down on an overhead view of your hovercraft, you go zooming up a river through



eight levels of everything the other side can throw against you. We're talking MiG-31 jet fighters, AH-1 helicopter gunships, armored PBRs, mines, missiles, tanks, and the occasional steel barricade thrusting out of the water just in time to ruin your day.

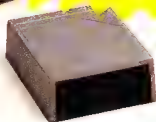
You're not without some surprises of your own, though. The trigger on your control stick activates a rapid-fire Vulcan cannon, and two thumb buttons allow you to launch missiles and hop over deadly obstacles. An accelerator pedal allows you to control your speed.

When the game starts, your assault team climbs aboard the hovercraft. The screen displays a profile map of all eight levels, with your current location highlighted by a flashing yellow box. Then



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ARCADE ACTION



your view shifts to the gloomy interior of an amphibious landing craft just as the massive door swings open. Stomp on the pedal and you're off.

Level 1 is a river delta where you battle airplanes and other hovercraft while maneuvering around trees, rocks, and mines. At the end of each level, you face a particularly nasty enemy. It might be a multi engine bomber, or an entire troop train blocking your way, but it's always something *big* — and it always requires numerous well-aimed shots to destroy. Once it's cleared, your hovercraft automatically zooms off toward the horizon and forward to the next level.

Between levels, as in *Operation Wolf*, the screen displays your progress on a map and shows your current score. As you proceed upriver, each level becomes more urban and more fortified. At one

point, you'll even have to fly through a nice little thunderstorm.

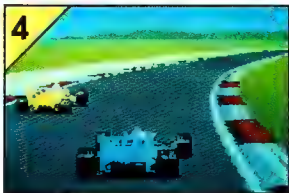
When you complete the eighth and last level, *Aqua Jack* treats you to a sequence of your team docking the hovercraft and successfully taking over the enemy stronghold. Then something really peculiar happens — a bald, gray guy with pointed ears appears on a monitor screen, along with some illegible writing. Who is this guy? Is he the enemy boss cursing you from his escape vehicle? And what does the writing mean? The game gives you no clue.

Finally, *Aqua Jack* ends with your hovercraft on the river shore at sunset. All of the enemy vehicles you've destroyed take a curtain call, and the game's design credits scroll past. A very satisfying conclusion.

Two hints: First, remember that the control stick positions both the gunsight and the missile cursor, so aim carefully. Also, wait for the missile-lock indicator to light up before launching a missile. Otherwise, you'll be a sitting duck while the unlocked missile goes off into the ether.

Final Lap

Another interesting game — albeit one that's been around for about a year — is Atari's *Final Lap*, a two-player formula car race. The unique feature of this game is the sit-down cabinet with two independent screens, two sets of controls, and two padded leather seats with stereo speakers in the headrests.



Final Lap is very much like a two-player *Pole Position*. In fact, you race on the same Fuji Speedway, and the blimp from *Pole Position* makes a guest appearance, hanging lazily in the sky as you tear around the track.

Final Lap's sound and graphics are much improved over *Pole Position*, but it's the two-player feature that makes this game attractive. Gone are the explosive, fiery crashes of *Pole Position*. *Final Lap* emphasizes one-on-one competition. If you can bump your opponent off the track, he'll spin out and lose valuable seconds. If one player finishes the lap within the allotted time, *both* players get to race for an extended time.

The only flaw in *Final Lap* is its steering wheels — they spin much too freely, as if you're driving on ice. Let's hope Atari updates *Final Lap* with the same excellent feed-back steering found in *Hard Drive'n*.

1 While cruising through this shattered village, watch out for the giant mine floating in the river (right center).

2 These jet fighters are formidable and persistent enemies. Try taking evasive actions.

3 This giant V/STOL (Vertical/Short Takeoff and Landing) bomber is bristling with gun turrets. But the bigger they are, the harder they fall.

4 Atari's *Final Lap* is similar to the classic *Pole Position* but allows two players to compete side by side.

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Omnitrend's *Universe 3* is notable for three reasons. First, it's pretty good science fiction. Second, it uses a playable role-playing system. Third, it's substantially different from its two predecessors, *Universe* and *Universe II*.

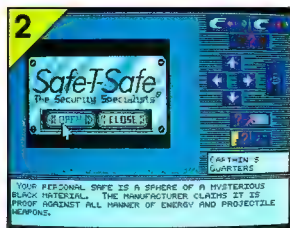
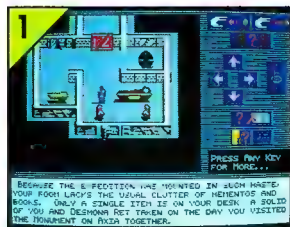
Universe was Omnitrend's first product, and it became a sci-fi classic. It was a strategy game (always



PC PLAYERS

SPACE VETS AND RACING 'VETTES

Neil Randall



welcomed by sci-fi buffs) in which you mined for ore and traded goods while searching for a hyperspace booster, a strange and valuable alien artifact.

Not a bad concept for a sci-fi game. But the problem, as many found out, was that *Universe* wasn't very interesting, graphically or otherwise. As one reviewer put it, *Universe* could have been named *Visceral in Space*.

Universe II dealt with some of these issues, but it too was a highly complex strategy game. Its advertising boasted that it came with a 115-page manual. Many game players don't want to read ten pages, let alone more than a hundred. Nevertheless, Omni-

trend's audience continued to expand.

Now comes *Universe 3*, and it's a welcome change from the others. Gone is the lengthy manual.

1 In *Universe 3*, you begin the expedition in your captain's quarters. At the upper right is a wall safe you should open.

2 By zooming in on the safe, you can open it and remove the contents. Be sure to read the personal note.

3 In the Hibernation Center, your four comrades wait for their awakening. One will die, but there's nothing you can do about it.

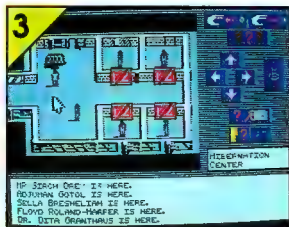
4 Gotoi is the bad guy of the party. Knowing that won't help you much, though. He'll cause trouble anyway.

The instructions are 15 pages long, and only eight of these are devoted to commands and game play. Furthermore, *Universe 3* is now very graphics oriented. Your character and your position are seen from an attractive overhead view, and you move from place to place using a mouse or the cursor keys.

The game's premise is also interesting. Once a spy for the Federated Worlds, you have now been assigned to travel to the HomeCluster, where your culture originated. All contact with the HomeCluster has been lost, and this has led to increasing strain — and even war — within your Local Group. Your job, basically, is to find out what gives.

Along the way, you're certain to run into complications. One is a suspected (and quickly proven) traitor on your ship. Another is the loss of an important diplomatic member of your expedition. Then, when you find yourself in a deserted city, you lose your mission orders and practically everything else you carry.

But you are nothing if not re-

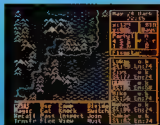


The Magic Candle

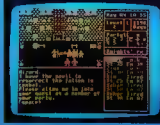
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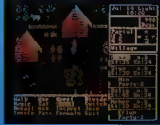
— Computer Gaming World



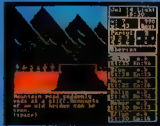
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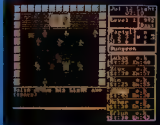
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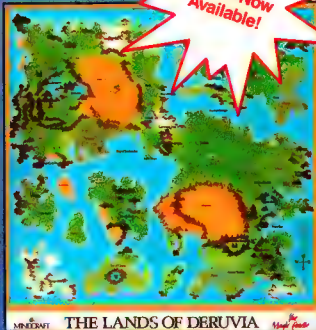
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The Magic Candle Volume I is currently available for: Apple II (64K required), IBM and Compatibles (in CGA, EGA and Tandy 1000 16-color mode), Commodore 64/128.

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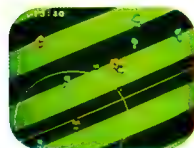
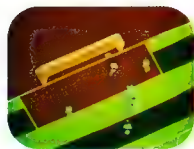
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PC PLAYERS

sourceful, and you'll find a way to solve all these problems. (At least, that's what the designers of *Universe 3* assume. Let's just say I'm eagerly awaiting the hint book.)

When the game starts, you see an overhead view of your chambers. You are Alex G. Seward, captain of the *Ulysses*-class vessel FWS *Union*. Your assignment is to establish diplomatic relations with the planet Amberggris. Using the keyboard or a mouse, you move to your wall safe and extract several important items. Three of these are mission documents, one is a personal letter, and another is a security card. Take them all.

Then it's off for a look around your ship. The O key opens the door, leading you into the corridor. From there you move to the other habitation compartments. In the compartment on your left you can get some food, while to your right you'll meet an important character.

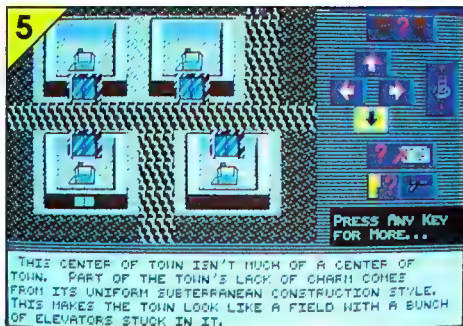
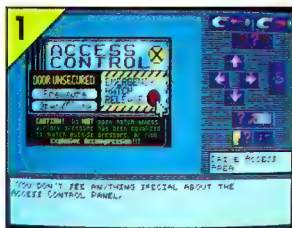
Once you're finished here, you should take the stairs to the science level. Head toward the top of the screen, and you'll be able to pick up a pair of UV glasses and a data machine. The other important room on this level is the Hibernation Center, where you'll need to zoom in on the machine to awaken your comrades. One of them will die; examine his body to see what's missing.



Now things get interesting. Go to the stairs again and head for the shuttle. (Be sure to save the game first, because you're about to get obliterated.) Enter, and try to get the shuttle started. It seems there's something wrong with the drive bay.

Afterwards, go to another level. There you find some iridium, which you should take with you for trading purposes. You'll also find an intruder in the drive bay. Push the button on a nearby machine, then get out of there.

Back to the shuttle? Sure. But it still won't get you anywhere, be-



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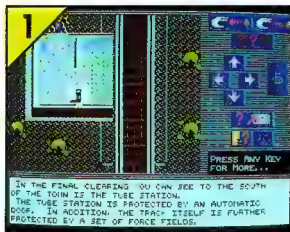
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PC PLAYERS

cause now it just doesn't work. Head to the bridge, get a report from the officer, and lead him to the drive bay. He'll repair it, so you can finally take off.

You end up outside the isolation area on Amberggris. Enter it



and explore. Obviously, things are not well. More important, you can't get outside without turning off the force field leading to the west. To do this, you'll need to get through the radiation door. (Remember what your parents told you about what cola does to your stomach?)

Universe 3 is a great game, and enjoyable to play. It's also frustrat-

ing, because most of the puzzles have only one solution. But common sense usually prevails, as long as you explore all possible areas. Best of all, a solid espionage plot is going on here. You'll be extremely annoyed to find most of your possessions gone after leaving the boat, but that's how you're supposed to feel. Getting them back will prove more than enticing.

Universe 3 is a welcome extension of Omnirend's *Universe* series. Unlike most sequels, it uses a playing system almost entirely

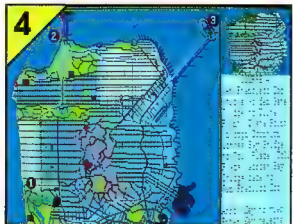
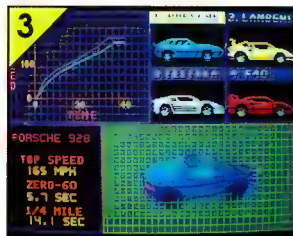
1 To buy a ticket to board the tube, you'll need some money. Try finding a card somewhere, and be prepared to get frustrated trying to retrieve it.

2 *Vette!*: In the garage, you select the 'Vette you'll drive. Stats are listed for each of the four types. Here the ZR1 was selected.

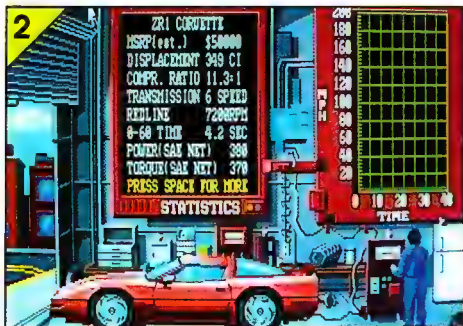
3 Here are the four possible opponents. Note that you can race against another person via modem or null-modem cable, as long as he also has a copy of the game.

4 The map of San Francisco runs from the San Francisco Zoo (bottom left), to the Golden Gate Bridge (upper center), to the Bay Bridge (upper right).

5 Hurting down the Great Highway at 99 mph, a semi is visible through the windshield (ahead to the left).



different from its predecessors — not just a new and improved model. More designers should follow this pattern: same universe, different game.



Vette!

By advertising *Vette!* as "The Real Duel!", Spectrum Holobyte seems to be taking a little shot at Accolade's *Test Drive II: The Duel*. In truth, though, these two games are more complementary than competitive. If you enjoy driving games — particularly those which simulate fast sports cars — you'll probably like the distinctly different flavors of both packages.

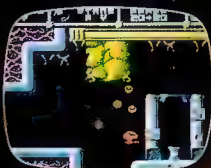
In *Vette!*, you drive a Corvette. Four are available: the 1989 stock

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PC PLAYERS

model, the 1989 ZR1 King of the Hill, the 1989 Callaway Twin Turbo, and the 1989 Callaway Sledgehammer. Your goal is to beat one of four other sports cars to the finish line. The opponents include a Lamborghini Countach, Porsche 928S, Ferrari Testarossa, and Ferrari F40. The manual lists complete statistics for each vehicle.

Vette!'s graphics are extremely impressive. It's placed in San Fran-



GAME PLAYER'S

cisco, and you can drive around the city at will. You can race against a computer-driven car, or — by connecting to another computer using a modem or null-modem cable — you can compete against a human opponent. The program works with a joystick, mouse, or keyboard controls.

The game comes with a map of San Francisco, and on the back is a list of the city's numerous points of interest. Many of these places are depicted in the game. The races take you along expressways for the most part, but if you're not really interested in winning, you can simply drive wherever you wish. There's also a tour mode that

- 1 Using the helicopter view is often an easier way to drive, especially when changing lanes.
- 2 Notice one of the windmills in Golden Gate Park with the extremely welcome and realistic side views.
- 3 Entering a curve on the San Francisco freeway, the city skyline is directly ahead.
- 4 This view, which combines the helicopter view and the dashboard view, shows the Golden Gate Bridge (ahead to the left).
- 5 You can travel anywhere you want in San Francisco, experiencing the hills, the docks, and even Haight-Ashbury.

lets you drive from landmark to landmark.

If you want to race, there are four different courses. The first (which you can complete with aid from a tutorial) takes you from the San Francisco Zoo in the southwest corner of the city to Vista Point, across the Golden Gate Bridge. This means you have to avoid traffic along the Great Highway, then wheel onto the freeway and race toward the bridge.

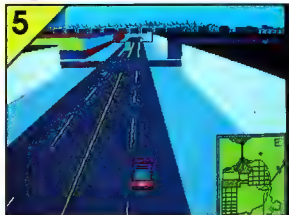
Freeway driving is nerve wracking, but one of the game's features can help you along. Hold down the K key, the right mouse button, or the 5 key on the numeric keypad, and you'll remain centered



in your lane. Use it often; it helps immensely.

Once you reach your destination, you must locate the finish line. Win, and you'll be rewarded. Lose, and you'll face derision. There are no other possible results. High scores are saved to disk.

What makes *Vette!* shine is its choice of driving views. You can look through the front windshield, of course, but you can also switch to the gorgeous helicopter view (with or without the instruments on your dashboard showing). This bird's-eye view is not only more attractive, but also makes controlling the car much easier.



You can shift gears yourself or let the computer do it for you. Your car can suffer damage, and the computer adjusts your opponent according to your abilities. And you even have side views in this game, which means you can look in all directions.

What about the comparison with *Test Drive II: The Duel*? If you like driving games, you'll probably want both; otherwise, you'll probably want neither. If forced to choose, however, I'd probably take *Vette!*. It's simply more fun driving around the city streets.

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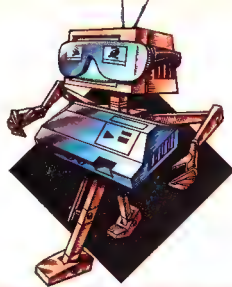
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Summer is the dry season for new videogames, but everything changes at this time of year. This issue of *Game Player's* was already well underway when we got a look at nine new games for the Sega Genesis (almost twice as many titles as were then available) and six new games for the Sega Master System.

Some were completely finished and ready for release, so by the time you read this, they've probably been available for at least a month. But others were still incomplete and probably won't appear in stores until mid to late December.



For the Genesis, we've seen *Golden Axe*, *Revenge of Shinobi*, *Arnold Palmer Golf*, *Rambo III*, *Super Hang-On*, *Mystic Defender*, *Truxton*, *Forgotten Worlds*, *Casino Games*, and *Wanted*. You'll find full reviews of *Golden Axe*, *Cloud Master*, and *Revenge of Shinobi* on pages 103, 105, and 108, respectively. For now, let's take a quick look at the others; we'll be publishing full reviews of some of these titles in future issues.



SEGA PLAYERS

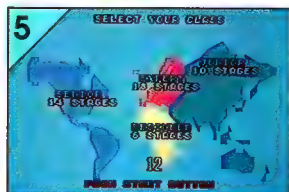
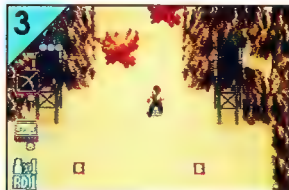
New Games For Genesis, Master System

Matthew A. Firme

Tom R. Halfhill

- 1 Your caddy in *Arnold Palmer Golf* can advise you on yardage, wind direction, and even club selection.
- 2 In the tournament mode of *Arnold Palmer Golf*, the sportscaster announces scores after each hole and overall standings after each round.
- 3 In stage 1 of *Rambo III*, you'll need all your weapons to escape the guards and enter the enemy camp.
- 4 A bonus stage in *Rambo III*: Shoot down the Soviet helicopter as quickly as you can for extra points.
- 5 The arcade mode in *Super Hang-On* allows you to choose race courses from around the world.

Arnold Palmer Golf. Golf games have evolved dramatically in recent years, offering increased control of features like club choice and ball spin, while better graphics add realism to the game play. The latest of this new breed is *Arnold Palmer Golf*. And this one has it all, from controllable stance to the option of asking your caddy's advice on each shot.



When play begins, you can choose a practice round, selecting courses in the U.S., Japan, or Great Britain. You pick the type of clubs you want (black carbon, glass fiber, or super ceramic) and the 14 clubs you'll carry. In tournament mode, you'll face 15 other golfers, battling for experience, ranking, and cash earnings. As your experience increases, so will your caddy's. The advice she offers will become more detailed and helpful.

On each shot, you control swing power, stance, and aim,

DO NOT ATTEMPT YOUR MISSION UNTIL THE CHOPPERS ARE OVERHEAD, SNIPERS ARE IN POSITION, AND YOUR HOMEWORK'S DONE.

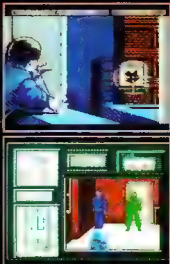
Not doing your homework could be a mistake. Every move you make could jeopardize your fellow rescuers, and those held captive.

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There are 15 levels of difficulty, from "Training Mission" to wickedly-fast "Jupiter Mission." Thrills are delivered in bold strokes, with super high quality graphics and animation.

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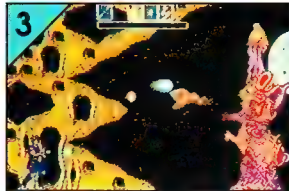
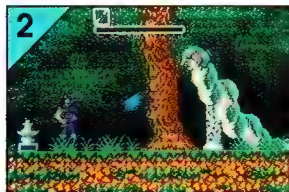


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SEGA PLAYERS



basing your decisions on such variables as wind speed and direction and the characteristics of your clubs. All this, coupled with the game's impressive graphics, makes *Arnold Palmer Golf* a must for any video golfer.

Rambo III. Vietnam vet John Rambo is at it again, this time in the new Genesis version of *Rambo III*. As in the movie, your mission is to rescue Colonel Troutman from behind enemy lines. You'll face tough opposition, though, relying on four different weapons (machine gun, bombs, flaming arrows,

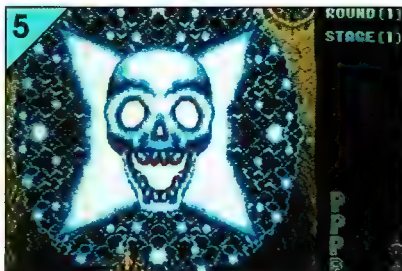
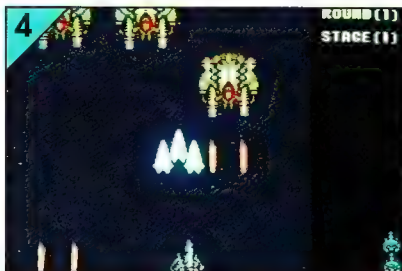
and a knife) to battle your way through six levels and countless enemy soldiers.

There's some strategy involved too, because each weapon varies in effectiveness. You can wait near the personnel carriers with your machine gun or knife, for instance, picking off emerging soldiers one by one. But it's far easier (not to mention more Rambo-like) simply to destroy the truck with a bomb before anyone can escape.

To rescue Troutman, you must infiltrate the enemy camp, free secret agents, and destroy as many weapons as possible. Between missions, you can earn bonus points by annihilating Soviet gunships and tanks with your bow and arrow.

Super Hang-On is the Genesis version of Sega's motorcycle-racing arcade game. It offers two play options, including the familiar arcade mode in which

you must complete each section of your course in the allotted time. In the second mode, you must cope not only with the race itself, but also with many variables. You purchase your motorcycle frame and engine, buying the best you can afford. Then select your mechanic (each has a different area of expertise) and choose a rival. You are



1 At the end of each race in the alternate mode of *Super Hang-On*, you'll be awarded prize money, with which you can upgrade your motorcycle.

2 In *Mystic Defender*, you'll face such fearsome enemies as this giant caterpillar.

3 As Yamato in *Mystic Defender*, you must free the lovely Alexandra from the evil King Zao's henchmen.

4 Some of the alien ships in *Truxton*, like the three shown here, must be hit several times before they can be destroyed.

5 Use the deadly force field sparingly in *Truxton*. You will need it to defeat larger ships.

now racing for prize money, hoping to earn enough to upgrade your bike and gain wealthy sponsors, each time improving your standings on the racing circuit.

These features add real depth to the game. The race becomes a contest of strategy as well as speed, and will challenge both new players and old *Hang-On* pros.

Mystic Defender. Alexandra, daughter of the Supreme Deity, has been kidnapped by henchmen of the evil King Zao. He plans to use the girl's spirit to awaken his master. Enter Joe Yamato, veteran fighter and magic-user. Single-handedly, he must halt Zao's heinous plot and rescue Alexandra.

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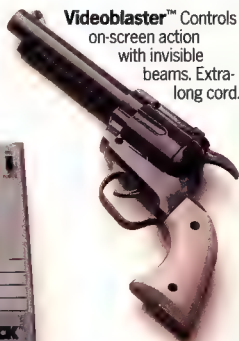
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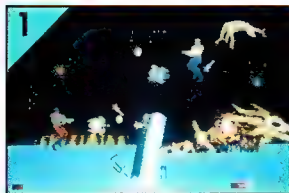
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SEGA PLAYERS



As Yamato, you will journey through strange lands and fight even stranger enemies. In fact, the artwork in this game is nothing short of spectacular. The scenes

have great depth, with backgrounds that scroll at different speeds, creating a three-dimensional effect. The animation is just as impressive, with some of the most gruesome characters we've seen. There are monks hanging from nooses, slowly swinging and apparently dead. But when you fire at them, they change into giant spiders. In some scenes, great toothed worms rise up from the ground, while in others you face a seething wall of brains. *Mystic Defender* is nothing if not unique.

Truxton is a shoot-em-up in the tradition of *Galaga* and *Space Invaders*. Your starship is attacked by many different alien vessels, some requiring more firepower to destroy than others. You'll fly over ground-based targets, too — photon cannons and huge tank-like vehicles.

To set it apart from similar shoot-em-ups, *Truxton* has a variety of weapons you can pick up during play, from simple torpedoes to screen-covering, auto-tracking streaks of lightning. You can gain power and speed by destroying certain items, and pick up smaller satellite ships of different types to aid in your fight.

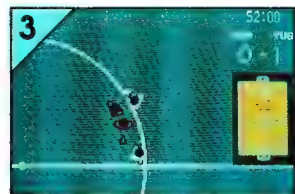
Truxton allows three attack options. The A button fires single shots, the C button fires continuously, and the B button activates a force field in the shape of a great skull that damages all enemies on the screen. You can use this powerful weapon only three times unless you collect certain power items.

Forgotten Worlds. The worlds are dangerous, uncertain, and controlled by alien monsters and their machines. The cities lie in ruin, with strange devices and weapons

rising up from the rubble. Now two soldiers have come to challenge the invaders, destroy their machines, and free the worlds from terror.

This Genesis version of the Capcom arcade favorite is every bit as good as the original, especially in sound and graphics. It offers both one- and two-player options, and a very appealing array of enemies, weaponry, screens, and alien bosses. You hover through the game, controlling your flight with the directional pad while rotating left and right with the A and C buttons, and firing with B. In front of you is your main weapon, a satellite that blocks enemy shots and adds to your firepower.

As you defeat aliens, you collect currency with which you can buy more powerful satellite weap-



1 In the two-player mode in *Forgotten Worlds*, players can attack enemies from both sides.

2 You can purchase many useful items in the shops of *Forgotten Worlds*.

3 In *World Championship Soccer*, you control the player highlighted by the arrow. As play progresses, control shifts to the player nearest the ball.

4 *World Championship Soccer* features graphic closeups of important plays and penalties.

5 If it's silence and solitude you want, the temples in *SpellCaster* are the last places to go. Notice the eyes of enemies lurking in the dark doorway.

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SEGA PLAYERS

ons, armor, and potions to restore your power. The two-player cooperative mode is a lot of fun and an enormous help in battling some of the tougher bosses.

World Championship Soccer. Select your team from any country, then pick your starting lineup after evaluating your players' speed, skill, and goal-keeping abilities. After the kickoff, you view the field from above, controlling the player marked with an arrow. The main screen shows only a small portion of the field in detail, but the entire field is displayed in a window. This becomes especially



important for long kicks, because the window shows the areas occupied by you and the opposing team.

The A, B, and C buttons control your player's movements, and in combination allow very lifelike maneuvers like high kicks, dives, and heading the ball. The play is very realistic, and in tournament mode you compete against other countries for the World Cup. *World Championship Soccer* is a great sports game, offering excitement and detail.

Sega Master System

SpellCaster is an action game placed in ancient Japan, but there are elements of strategy and role playing as well. Most screens involve fighting your way past hordes of enemies. But there are interludes in which you must explore, talk to people, gather clues, and pick up objects.

The real key to winning *SpellCaster* is



knowing when to use your magic. You can unleash balls of fire, lightning bolts, and tornadoes on your enemies, and protect yourself with a force field, the power of flight, and a spell that returns certain opponents to the underworld.

Since *SpellCaster* is a long game that will probably take you many hours to complete, a password feature lets you stop playing and resume later where you left off.

Walter Payton Football combines action and strategy as you coach any NFL team in a game against the computer or another player. Offensive and defensive players each select from a menu of plays and formations. When the ball is snapped, the offensive player takes control of the ball carrier and the defensive player controls a



1 A spaghetti stand in ancient Japan? It's really yakisoba, but evidently something got lost in the English translation.

2 When the ball is snapped in *Walter Payton Football*, the offensive player controls the ball carrier and the defensive player controls a tackler.

3 Offensive plays and defensive formations are selected from this screen in *Walter Payton Football*.

4 Atop this fountain in *Captain Silver* is the freeze clock, which temporarily stops the game's countdown timer.

5 You can find special jumping boots at the top of this ladder in *Captain Silver*. With the boots, you can leap high enough to reach other useful items.

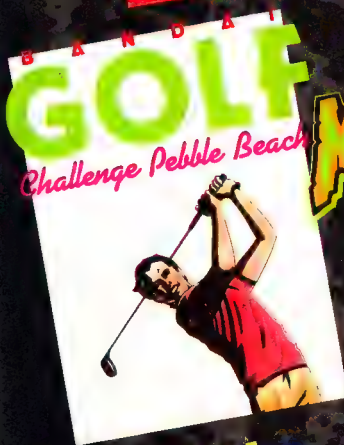
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tackler. The other men on the field move under computer control, in a more or less logical fashion. Altogether, *Walter Payton Football* seems to strike a good balance between on-field action and sideline strategy.

Captain Silver casts you in the role of a young sailor in search of buried treasure. The only problem is that the treasure is guarded by pirates, spirits, nasty creatures, and Captain Silver's ghost. Before you can find the treasure, you must fight everything from sewer rats and piranhas to carnivorous plants and the Chesire Cat. Then, of course, there's your final show-

down with the ghost of Captain Silver himself. Along the way, you'll pick up gold coins, rings, crowns, keys, special jumping boots, and protective potions. You can use the gold coins to buy useful items in The Shop, assuming you have a key that opens the door.

There's one more complication: a time limit. Whenever the on-screen timer counts down to zero, you lose a life. This wrinkle adds a little more urgency to your

1 *Casino Games* lets you choose your poker opponent. Nancy is a brash but clever player.

2 If you think arcade games have an appetite for quarters, wait until you try this slot machine in *Casino Games*.

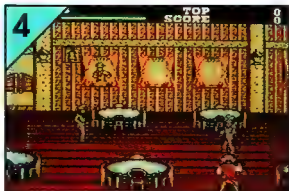
3 Bad guys abound in *Wanted*. Just make sure you don't shoot the sheriff or an innocent citizen.

4 Watch your step (and your back) when you enter this Wild West saloon in *Wanted*.



count at the casino. They'll assign you a password so you can continue playing later with the money from your account. On the other hand, if you go bankrupt, you'll have to start all over again with \$500.

Wanted requires a Sega Light Phaser, and it's basically a Wild West gunfight. As you stroll through typical scenes from the American West of the 1880s, various bad guys pop out of doors, appear in windows, jump from behind trees, gallop around on horses, and take potshots at you



from balconies.

The obvious response, it would seem, is to shoot first and ask questions later. However, there are some friendlies to worry about. If you're not careful, you might gun down the sheriff or an innocent bystander. Needless to say, this won't do wonders for your final score.

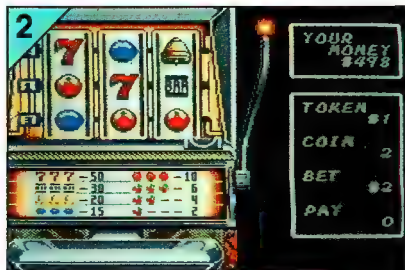
GP



quest for the loot.

Casino Games is actually five games in one: blackjack, baccarat, poker, pinball, and a slot machine. It's modeled after the casinos in Las Vegas, complete with neon lights and pretty women who wink at you. The object is refreshingly simple — win as much money as possible. If you top \$1 million, you break the bank and win the game.

When you begin playing, you get \$500 cash. If you manage to build that stake into a sum of at least \$1000, you can open an ac-



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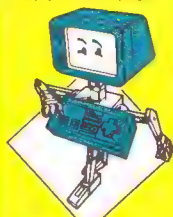
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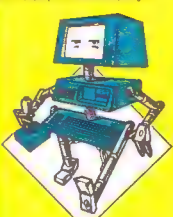
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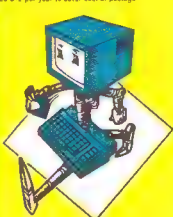
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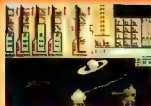
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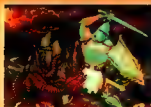
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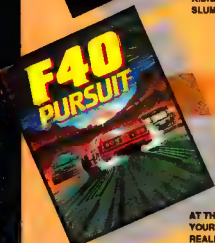
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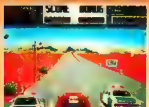
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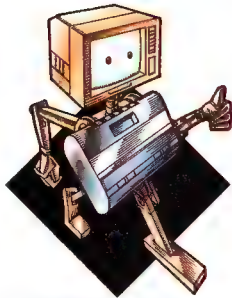
TITAN

MAKE YOUR WAY THROUGH THIS STRATEGIC PUZZLE OF BISKY WORLDS WITH YOUR MAGNETIC CONTROL UNIT. BUT BE CAREFUL, THE ULTRA-FAST SCROLLING HAS ALREADY CAUSED SOME MENTAL BREAKDOWNS.

Xenophobe is an apt title for a videogame. The dictionary definition is "a person unduly fearful or contemptuous of strangers or foreigners." That certainly describes the central character in most games — someone who's out to get as many strangers as possible.

But in *Xenophobe*, recently released for the 7800 and XE game systems, it's hard to figure out who's the most xenophobic — you or the numerous other creatures you meet. According to the manual, *Xenophobes* are "hostile aliens...infesting space stations vital to your planet's security." *Xenophobe* boils down to a contest to see who can exhibit the most xenophobic behavior in the least amount of time.

When the game starts, you enter the first of nine infested space stations. Most types of *Xenophobes* are relatively minor annoyances, but the real heavies are the Rollerbabies and Snotterpillars. Rollerbabies are alien armadillos capable of inflicting serious injury if you don't jump out of the way. And Snotterpillars are large, slug-



ATARI SAFARI

Xenophobe For 7800 And XE

Tom R. Halfhill

Although *Xenophobe* is best described as a shoot-em-up, there are some elements of strategy. If you don't clear all the *Xenophobes* in a certain amount of time, the space station is overrun and you must retreat to the next station. You have the option, however, of destroying the station — if you can find the self-destruct code. Also, most stations have several floors linked by elevators, and you must find the most efficient way to clear the station before time runs out.

In some respects, this game seems incomplete. For instance, there are tools and other items you can pick up besides weapons, but there's no way to use them, and

Split-screen action: In two-player mode, each person gets his own view. Both players can move independently around the space station.

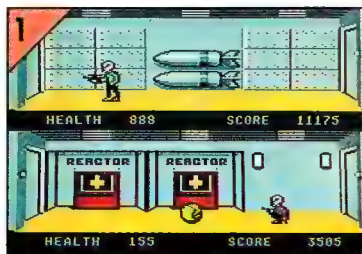
1

Player 1 (top) finds a more powerful laser pistol lying on the floor. Meanwhile, player 2 (bottom) is having trouble with a Rollerbaby and a Snotterpillar.

2

3

Player 2 seems to be having a bad day. That leaping Snotterpillar is about to eat him for lunch.



like creatures that leap at you with often fatal results.

You begin your mission armed with nothing but your fists. Luckily, the space stations are littered with weapons: phaser and laser pistols, lightning rifles, poofers, guns, and grenades. Except for the grenades, however, you can carry only one weapon at a time.

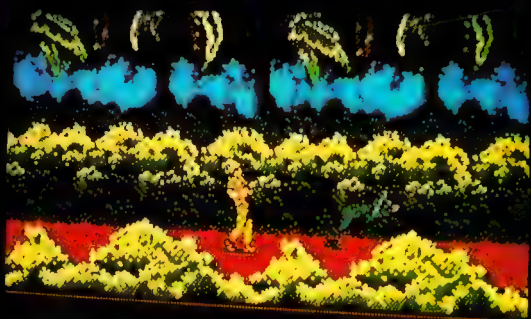


they apparently serve no purpose other than to increase your score.

On the other hand, *Xenophobe's* outstanding feature is its two-player mode. Two people can play at once, each with a split-screen view of the action. It's much easier to fight the *Xenophobes* this way, and it's a feature all too rare in home videogames.

GP

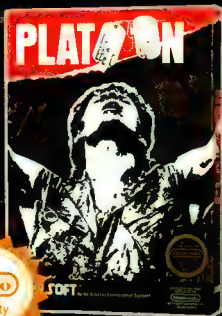
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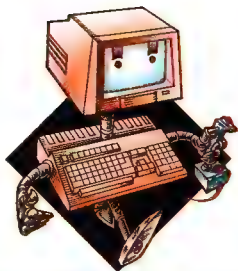
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LEA

Part strategic war game, part arcade action game, *Lords of the Rising Sun* is all Cinemaware — a perfect example of the new style of computer game popularized by that company.

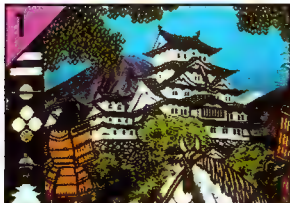
Early Cinemaware titles such as *Defender of the Crown* emphasized outstanding animated graphics. The games looked almost like



AMIGA PLAYERS

LORDS OF THE RISING SUN

Sheldon Leemon



movies, but game play suffered. Cinemaware's more recent titles — like *Rocket Ranger* — have achieved a better balance between game strategy, arcade skills, graphics, and sound. In *Lords of the Rising Sun*, this balance shifts even more toward engrossing game play.

Most of the action takes place on a scrolling game map. Although the map is beautifully drawn, it doesn't feature the kind of large, photo-realistic artwork that is Cinemaware's trademark. And while there are action sequences similar to the ones in *Defender of the Crown* and *Rocket Ranger*, you're not forced to participate in them if you prefer a strictly strategic game.

In *Lords of the Rising Sun*, you play one of two brothers, Yoritomo or Yoshitsune, fighting to overthrow the ruling Taira clan. The former brother has better lead-

ership skills, while the latter has better fighting skills. In either case, your forces are greatly outnumbered. You command three generals, and the Taira clan has seven.

To further complicate the picture, your brother commands three "friendly" armies that may not seem so friendly once the enemy is

1 The most elaborate graphics are lavished on menu screens, which you use to select your next action.

2 These screens display explanatory text between "scenes" in the game.

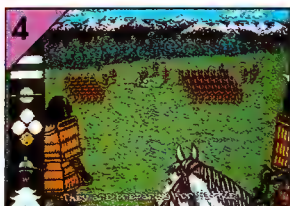
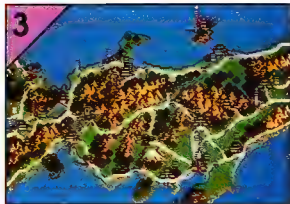
3 You'll probably spend most of your time staring at this scrolling game map.

4 When you meet an opposing army, you move from the map screen to a menu screen that lets you choose whether to review your troops, fight, or try to pass unhindered.

on the run. There are also six independent armies which can at various times be considered enemies, allies, or neutrals.

You maneuver your armies around a scrolling map of 51 cities, castles, and monasteries. Stop at friendly bases for food and replacements, fight enemy armies you meet on the way, and besiege hostile castles to acquire new bases for your men. As your armies gain strength, you can force friendly or nonaligned armies into alliances, giving you more generals to control. The object of the game is to capture and hold all 19 castles.

There are several action sequences in the game, all optional. The most common is the battle

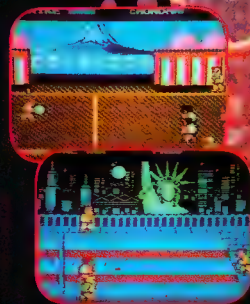


sequence, in which you direct your swordsmen and archers by moving the mouse. If you are victorious, you can pursue the opposing general on horseback as he flees — very much like the jousting in *Defender of the Crown*. In another action sequence, you can lay siege to a castle (this is essentially a maze game in which you try to reach the castle keep and kill the main guard). When you're defending a castle that is under siege, you use a bow and arrows to shoot the invaders. Finally, another action

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AMIGA PLAYERS



sequence is a ninja attack. When an enemy ninja tries to assassinate you — and this can happen at any time — you must defend yourself by using your sword to deflect the shiriken (throwing stars).

The graphics and sound effects in these sequences are good, but the mouse control is not as tight as in other games that emphasize arcade-style action. (A trackball mouse replacement can be a big help.) Again, though, the action sequences are usually optional. You can intervene in any battle to personally lead the troops, or simply let your generals carry on the fight by themselves.

Learning the basic moves and game controls is fairly easy, but mastering the complex strategies (and learning to distinguish between generals with names like Shigehira and Shigemori) will take



many hours. They should be hours enjoyably spent, however. The game play is reminiscent of the board game *Risk*, with the computer assuming some of the burden of determining the outcome of battles and sieges. Once you get past the basics, there are many



1 Sometimes the enemy doesn't give you a choice — in which case you line up for battle. The battle flags give information about the strength and experience of the two sides.

2 By moving the mouse, you direct the movement of your troops in battle.

3 When the enemy retreats, you can give chase in the Horseback Pursuit action sequence.

4 After the battle, you can return home to quietly contemplate your next move. Maybe it's time to send a ninja to assassinate one of your enemies.

subtleties to explore — such as using ninjas to assassinate your enemies, and finding the four sacred objects of the Imperial Regalia.

About the only thing that really bothered me were the screens that print explanatory messages before and after certain sequences. While these messages may be helpful the first time you read them, they get old very quickly and slow down the pace of the game unnecessarily.

On the other hand, Cinemaware deserves compliments for allowing the game to be loaded

from a hard disk (though it's still copy protected), and for using spare memory to preload the game sequences (so that no disk accesses are needed if you have enough memory).

Although *Lords of the Rising Sun* may be short on Cinemaware's traditional cinematic effects, it is long on quality of game play. Once you start playing, you'll have a hard time stopping — and nobody can ask more of a game than that.

GP

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in your ear

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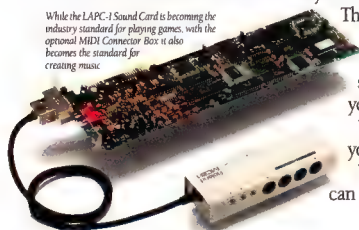
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System Requirements: IBM-PC/XT/AT or compatible, minimum 256k RAM

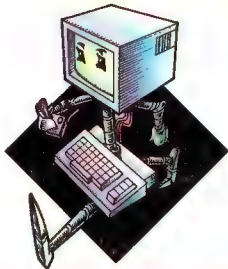
Australia's Strategic Studies Group is known best for its complex war games, so its first fantasy role-playing title comes as something of a surprise. *Fire King* is such a departure from SSG's strategic battle simulations that it hardly seems like a product from the same company — and, in a way, it isn't.

Fire King was actually produced for SSG by Micro Forte,



another Australian game company. Micro Forte's apparent goal was to come up with a fast-playing fantasy game along the lines of Activision's *Prophecy* and Origin System's *Times of Lore*. Another goal, obviously, was to endow the game with a user interface that would be comfortable and easy to learn. *Fire King* succeeds on both counts.

Your quest in *Fire King* is, first of all, to destroy the evil beast that lives in the catacombs below the city. This beast was responsible for the death of the Fire King, the disappearance of the Water Mage, the insanity of the Earth Mage, and the



COMMODORE PLAYERS

A NEW SOURCE OF FANTASY

Neil Randall

wounding of the Wind Mage. These mages once maintained the harmony of the land, and now everything is disrupted.

Only one adventurer has at-

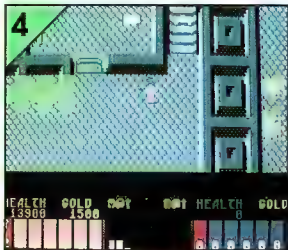
tempted to find and destroy the beast. He was never seen again. Now it's your turn, and for some unknown reason you decide to give it a shot.

Actually, you are just one of a cast of six characters. When the game begins, you select which of these characters to play. They range from the brawny but brainless Brodrick Broadaxe to the off-the-



wall Mungo the Magician (not to mention Sally the Slaughtermaid). All are beginners, but all can do the job.

You start the adventure from your lodgings in the city. Scattered about the room are a couple of keys and some food. Using the joystick, you can move your character toward the items, picking them up simply by walking into them. Food is consumed automati-



cally, thereby increasing your health. Other items end up in one of your seven pockets.

Each pocket can hold up to nine items of any one type, and using your pockets wisely is central to winning this game. You should keep one pocket as full of

1 *Fire King's* opening screen displays the fine graphics that grace this game. Notice the one- and two-player options. The two versions have very different flavors.

2 You can play one of these six characters. By pressing the corresponding number, you can see each character's statistics.

3 Sally the Slaughtermaid, in the middle of the screen, walks toward a key lying on the floor. When she reaches it, the key automatically appears in one of her pockets (bottom left).

4 Downstairs from her lodgings, Sally comes across an armory. Guards pace back and forth on the other side of the wall. Enter this area to acquire several important weapons.

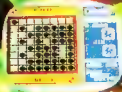
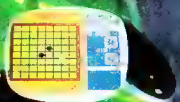
It's as simple as black & white,
but it can blow your mind...

Othello

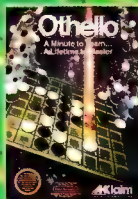
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win the game.

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matter where you play, you'll flip!



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keys as possible, and another packed with death spells. You should also strive to keep one pocket empty, so you can pick up new objects. For instance, if you don't have an empty pocket when you're about to grab the magic mirror, you'll find yourself surrounded by attacking wraiths.



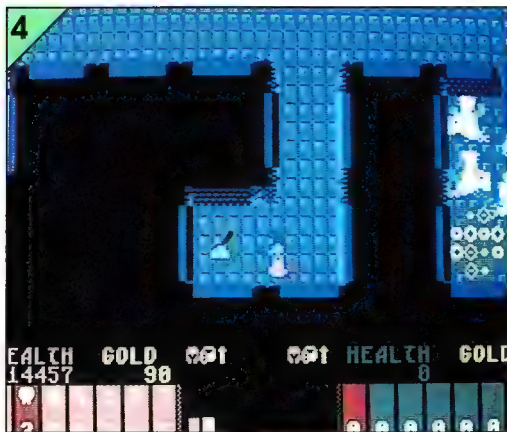
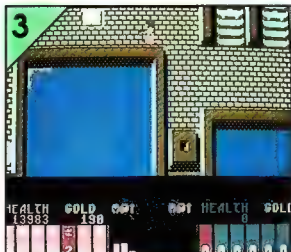
To remove an object from your pocket, just press the Commodore key and select the pocket with the joystick. Then you can either use the item, drop it, or resume play. Pressing the Commodore key twice automatically selects the item in the highlighted pocket. Keeping the death-spell pocket highlighted can save you a great deal of trouble.

Eventually you'll make it down through the catacombs to the beast. By following the tutorial in the manual, you should be able to destroy him without much difficulty. Afterward, you find the Fire King's coffin. The tutorial ends at this point, and the remainder of the quest is up to you. In order to find the Fire King, you must work your way through a forest maze

COMMODORE PLAYERS

and survive many other dangers, so managing your resources becomes even more important.

Shooting enemies is simply a



1 Fastback's shop contains several items, but nothing's free. Keys are cheap and food is expensive. The boots help you avoid fire and water.

2 Sally seems to have reached an impasse. To get past this point in the sewers, you must know the name of the creature you've just destroyed. Check the manual.

matter of aiming the joystick and pressing the fire button. Death spells and bombs are useful because they make individual shots unnecessary.

Mastering *Fire King's* playing system takes an hour or so, after which you'll spend an evening working your way through the first quest. From then on, the game plays quickly, yet there's enough to keep you going for quite awhile. *Fire King* is a superb late-night game. You can play for a short period, then save your position and resume the next evening.

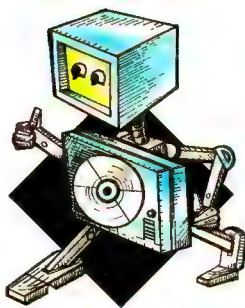
SSG has always been a company to watch—if you were a war gamer. With *Fire King*, SSG has just attracted a whole new group of fans.

GP

3 At the docks, Sally discovers that the beast has sealed off the exits to the city. White rats await her here, and she must make her way back to the sewers.

4 Down in the catacombs, Sally finds a lever near the wall. Pulling it gives her the power to walk through walls, which she needs to enter the room to her right.

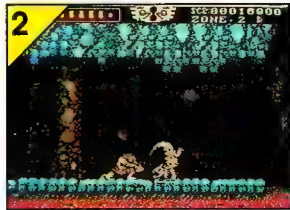
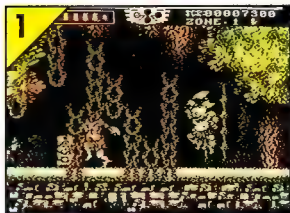
Welcome to our first "Turbo Players" column for the NEC TurboGrafx-16. Although we've been covering the TurboGrafx-16 in each of the past few issues of *Game Player's*, this is the first regular column we've devoted to NEC's exciting new videogame system. From now on, Turbo Players will be a monthly feature of *Game Player's* — just like our col-



TURBO PLAYERS

THE LEGENDARY AXE AND VICTORY RUN

Matthew A. Firme



umns for the Nintendo Entertainment System, Sega Genesis and Master Systems, PC-compatible computers, and other popular systems. In the months ahead, we'll be reviewing the best games currently available for the TurboGrafx-16, and we'll also give you early peeks at games to come.

This month, let's take a closer look at two of the games released at the launch of the TurboGrafx-16: *The Legendary Axe* and *Victory Run*. Both are important games, because they fulfill the initial demand for titles in two popular genres: action/adventure and road racing. *The Legendary Axe* bears some similarity to *Golden Axe*, a Sega arcade game that's also being released for the Sega Genesis. And *Victory Run* resembles Atari's

classic *Pole Position* and Sega's *Out Run*, long-time arcade favorites. Yet both *The Legendary Axe* and *Victory Run* offer interesting variations on these themes and do a good job of showing off the TurboGrafx-16's advanced graphics and sound capabilities.

The Legendary Axe

Your name is Gogan, and you are returning to your village of Min-ofu after two years of studying the arts of the warrior. You are now a skilled fighter, quick and strong, ready for some well-deserved rest.

But upon entering your village, you find that your people are being terrorized by the Jagu, an evil cult. A bloodthirsty bunch, each year the Jagu demand that the villagers offer a human sacrifice to their leader, Jagu himself. This year's victim is Flare, your friend.

And so, armed only with Sting, the legendary axe, you set out to vanquish the enemy. You must fight your way through the Evil Place, their mountain hideout; find and destroy Jagu; and rescue Flare.

The Legendary Axe is a horizontally scrolling game with very

The Legendary Axe: Destroy as many of the Jagu idols as you can — they always contain power items. And keep an eye on your power gauge at the top of the screen.

1

Defeat these leaping lizards by moving in close and attacking with quick, repeated chops. Don't let the screen scroll, or more of them will show up.

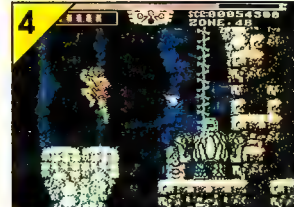
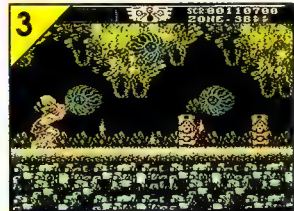
2

To beat this onslaught of Aqua Lungs, wait in the lower left corner for an opportunity to destroy them one by one.

3

Don't try to battle the rock monster on this narrow ledge. Leap over to him, then jump back again and wait.

4



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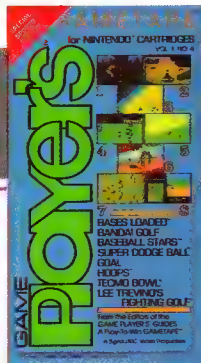
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smooth, flicker-free transitions from screen to screen. You control Gogan's movements — left and right, up and down ropes and ladders — with the four-way directional pad. Button 1 controls your axe, and button 2 your jumps. The game instructions recommend that you don't use the controller's built-in turbo feature for this game.

Now, you may be thinking you've heard all this before: hero progressing from left to right, jumping and attacking and ducking. But what sets this variation apart — and makes it a lot of fun to play — are the advanced features

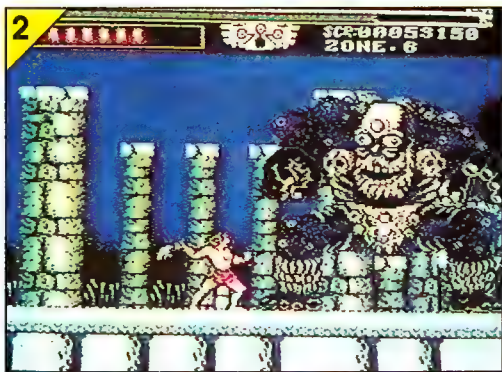
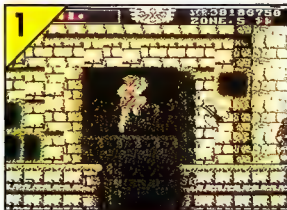
TURBO PLAYERS

1 To make this tricky jump, duck when the Nomad throws his axe high. As it returns, follow it across.

2 The terrible Jagu — made up of the souls of all the enemies you've faced thus far.

3 Victory Run: The starting line. Your replacement parts at the top of the screen are blue, indicating that they're in good condition.

4 After you've completed each stage, the status screen shows your position on the map and the condition of your replacement parts.



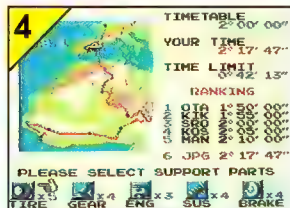
of the TurboGrafx-16 system. Gogan is a large, well-defined character, as are all his enemies. The animation is clean and lifelike, especially when you're wielding the axe. Gogan really winds up, and his arm extends forward with crushing force. Sparks fly as the axe strikes its target. Enemies recoil in pain, disappearing in bright

swirls of lost energy.

The sound effects and music in *The Legendary Axe* are outstanding. The background music is complex, full, and less monotonous than the soundtracks of videogames for less capable systems. All this makes for greater playability; increased identification with the action and the hero; a better environment; and

more interest in completing Gogan's task.

Another thing that sets *The Legendary Axe* apart from similar games is the number of factors which affect Gogan's attacking power. For example, a gauge at the top of the screen measures your power, the force behind your next axe-swing. With each swing you tire and lose power. In this game, therefore, you must do more than just chop away. Some enemies require stronger blows with the axe than others. Although these



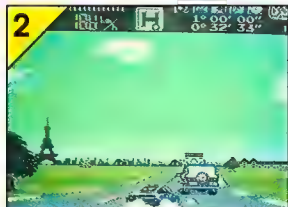
tougher foes can be beaten with repeated, less powerful attacks, it is often wiser to wait, allowing Gogan to rest between blows and recover strength. An enemy that might take four quick swings to defeat can be destroyed more efficiently with a single stroke at full power.

You can increase your maximum potential power by collecting the power supply shields found inside idols the Jagu have left everywhere. By smashing these idols, you can find items which will not only increase the force of your attack, but also add to your vitality (Gogan's life gauge), your attack speed, and the number of extra



lives. These power items can be important, so be sure to find as many idols as you can. Some are out of the way and others are completely hidden.

As you move through the Evil Place, searching out Jagu and battling his followers, don't forget to take time to appreciate the graph-

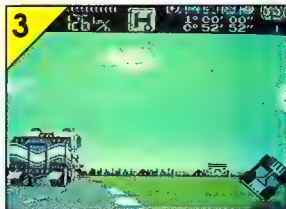


ics, the vivid colors and animation, and the beautiful backgrounds. And once you reach Jagu, try not to be so surprised by the size and detail of his on-screen character that you forget why you're there. Remember — Flare is depending on you.

Victory Run

Drivers, take your positions — it's race time! And this is no ordinary race, but a true road rally running 8,073 miles from Paris, France, to Dakar, Senegal. You'll weave through the twisting, challenging French countryside and across the

blistering sands of the Sahara, driving day and night through eight checkpoints. In a cross-country race like this, it's not the fastest driver who wins, but the smartest!

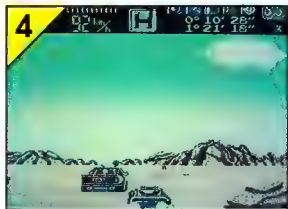


Victory Run, a Hudson Soft title for the TurboGrafx-16, is a truly entertaining game. Thanks to the TurboGrafx-16's enhanced capabilities, *Victory Run* features better graphics and more complex options than other racing games. You play from a point of view just behind your car, which offers a realistic perspective of the road ahead and the scenery all around. And the scenery is impressive. In the first stage of the race you see the Eiffel Tower and the Arc De Triomphe on the distant horizon, slowly growing larger as you draw near Paris. Objects close to your car zip by at dizzying speed, and the screen scrolls both up and down and left and right as you follow the road. The varying movement of objects close up and

far away creates a genuine sense of three-dimensional reality.

The game makes good use of the TurboPad. You control acceleration with button 1 and braking with button 2. The four-way directional pad lets you steer (left and right) and shift gears (up and down).

As the race begins, you get a



supply of 20 replacement parts — up to four of each of the five parts you are most likely to wear out. You can select from tires, gears, engines, suspension components, and brakes. Choose these replacement parts carefully. During the desert portions of the race, for instance, you're really going to punish your tires and suspension, so you should stock plenty of these items.

The combination of parts selection and realistic control of gears, speed, and braking lends this game an authenticity that others lack. *Victory Run* is an excellent addition to the popular genre of racing games.

GP

- 1 Watch your speed at night. Obstacles and other drivers aren't as easy to see.
- 2 Although Paris is beautiful, don't forget to keep your eyes on the road. Even a little bump will cost you time and harm your vehicle...
- 3 ...and a real collision is disastrous!
- 4 The road is dry and rough through the desert portions of the race. Don't forget to bring plenty of extra tires.



CHEAP THRILLS

CARDS AND CRAPS

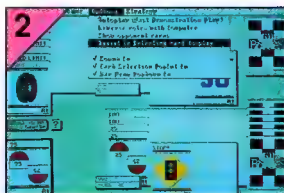
Arlan R. Levitan



Mille Bornes 4.01, for IBM PCs and compatibles with EGA or VGA graphics, is a faithful and easy-to-play computer version of a French card game that was first popularized by Parker Brothers in the early 1960s. In English, *Mille Bornes* (pronounced "meel-born") means "1000 milestones." The original four-player card game represented a cross-country road race in which the object was to "drive" exactly 1000 kilometers by playing cards with different mileage values. Since the computer version of *Mille Bornes* allows only two players (you against the computer, known as "Hal2001"), the race has been shortened to 700 kilometers.

The deck contains three basic groups of cards. Milestone cards come in denominations of 25, 50, 75, 100, and 200 kilometers. These cards allow you to advance toward the finish line. Hazard cards — such as Out of Gas, Accident, and Flat Tire — are used to impede your opponent's progress. Remedy cards — such as Gasoline, Repairs, and Spare Tire — counteract the matching hazard cards.

Special remedy cards prevent your adversary from playing hazard cards against you for the duration of a hand. For example, laying

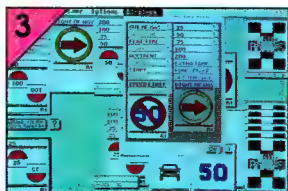


Mille Bornes for the PC is based on a French card game that represents a road race. Notice the detailed graphics and special character set.

If you're not sure which card to play next, you can drop down a menu and ask the computer for advice.

The Strategy menu offers useful information. There are also built-in help screens that explain the game's rules.

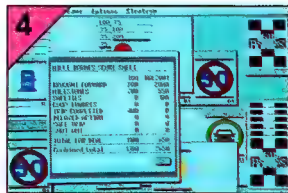
Can you beat Hal2001, the computer opponent? As this score sheet shows, it's not easy.



down a Driving Ace card protects you against Accident cards.

At the end of every hand, each player's points are tallied. Hands continue until one player wins by exceeding 5000 points.

Mille Bornes looks professional and plays great. The cards are highly detailed and colorful, and the mouse-driven user interface (with optional keyboard commands) makes the game easy to manipulate. Built-in help screens explain how to play the game and how to use the program. Drop-down menus offer plenty of useful options. You can save and load games, turn the sound effects on or off, and ask the computer for advice on which card to play next. If you have trouble picking up the rules, you can even watch the computer play itself for awhile. And if Hal2001 is regularly beating your pants off, you can peek at his cards or trade hands.



Mille Bornes is a very polished program that's at the top of the heap of shareware games. For the suggested \$25 registration fee, author Richard Tom will send you the latest version of *Mille Bornes*, including the *Turbo Pascal 5.0* source code and other game-related programming tools. For an additional \$5, you can get the source code for the game's Macintosh-like user interface. Registered users also get a one-year, money-back guarantee. You can contact Richard Tom at 1112 Cartier Avenue, Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada V3K 2B9.

Craps For Amiga

Many people think of craps as a simple dice-rolling gambling game. But if you've ever visited a casino in Las Vegas, Reno, or At-

CHEAP THRILLS

1 *Las Vegas Craps* for the Amiga features outstanding graphics and digitized speech.

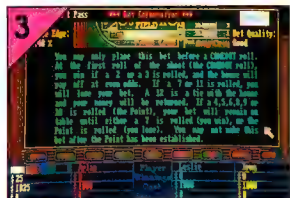
2 The main screen proves that this game's author pays attention to detail. You can make any legal bet merely by clicking on the appropriate area of the table.

3 Help screens explain the rules regarding each kind of bet. You can use this program to play craps or learn craps.

4 Are the dice running cold? Pull down a menu and ask the computer for advice.

After receiving your stake and specifying the maximum allowable wager, you're ready to roll. The program's help screens offer complete information on each type of bet possible, including payout odds, the house's edge, and the advisability of the bet. A separate documentation file offers a wealth of information about craps. More than 20 pages long, it explains how to use all of the program's features, and it even includes lengthy craps tutorials for both beginning and advanced players.

The most unique feature of *Las*



Vegas Craps is its Strategy Editor. You can set up a series of bets to be made on each roll, depending on conditions you define. After creating a strategy, you can test it to see how profitable it is. "Strats" can be edited and saved on disk.

Programmer Arthur Tedeschi's attention to detail and insight into craps make *Las Vegas Craps* the best simulation of this game we've ever seen. The suggested shareware registration fee is \$20, and registered users receive a laser-printed copy of the instruction manual and a free copy of the next revision of the game. Tedeschi can be contacted at 4506 Osceola Street, Denver, CO 80212.

GP



lantic City, you know that craps is a bewildering game whose rules are nearly impossible to follow.

Las Vegas Craps for the Amiga is a full-featured simulation of an actual casino craps table. You can use it to master the intricacies of "throwing the bones" for high stakes, or simply play it as an entertaining diversion. It's a textbook example of what good Amiga shareware should be. *Las Vegas Craps* combines fine graphics, a



full range of features and options, digitized (not synthesized) speech, and a fluid user interface. It also accommodates up to four players.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA

TURTLES



Michelangelo fights with nunchucks. His weapons cover the most screen area, even though he's one of the weaker turtles.



Donatello's preferred weapon is the bo staff. He has the longest reach, the greatest strength, and the slowest speed.



Leonardo specializes in the katana blades. Use him when you need to conserve energy for your stronger turtles.



Raphael fights with the sai — he's deadliest against flying enemies.

HARD-SHELL HEROES TO THE RESCUE!

They're mean! They're green! They're everywhere!

About four years ago, two young comic book fans named Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird wrote and inked the first adventure of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Their concept was wacky, even for comic books: four genetically altered turtles who become humanoid, adopt the names of Italian Renaissance painters, and acquire black-belt expertise in the martial arts. They also develop a passion for pizza (with extra sauce) and a healthy appetite for partying.

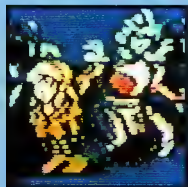
The turtles made their debut in a crude black-and-white comic book with very limited circulation. Maybe it was the sheer nuttiness of the title, but for some reason the comic book caught on and quickly sold out — as did reprints and subsequent issues. A host of imitations soon followed, with titles such as *Armor-Plated Adolescent Aardvarks*. The imitators soon faded from sight, but the original turtles became a genuine phenomenon.

Now the turtles are an established part of American pop culture. They are stars of their own syndicated TV series, with several videocassettes in the stores and more on the way. It was only a matter of time before a Nintendo game appeared.

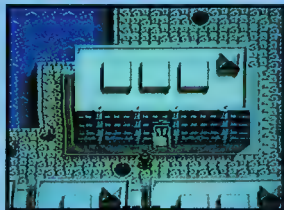
Pleasant surprise: *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* happens to be one of the best spin-off games of the year...and also one of the most difficult to beat. To help you get into the action and *stay* there without turning into turtle soup, *Game Player's* proudly presents the whole (well, almost) pizza, slice by slice.

NINTENDO GAME
MONTH

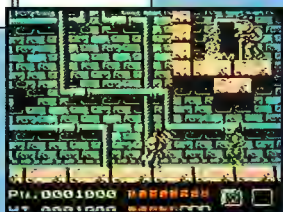
William R. Trotter



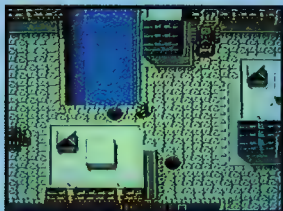
As the game begins, the turtles' friend April has been kidnapped by Shredder, their worst enemy.



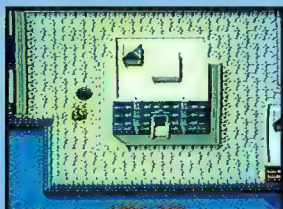
As soon as you leave the safety of the sewer, two enemy foot soldiers will come at you. Escape them by ducking into the nearest manhole.



The first mini-boss monster resembles a giant pig. Stand back and let Donatello destroy him from a distance.



Once you're back on the street, head for the dockside manhole. Your first slice of pizza is waiting there.



Deciding where to go next is easy — there's only one entrance in sight.



Inside, be prepared for an attack by flying nuisances.



At the end of level 1, you'll find April. Boss Bebop can sap lots of energy, so wait until he lands, then hit him with a side-to-side motion.



From this point on, you can get messages from April by pushing the Start button and calling up a subscreen.



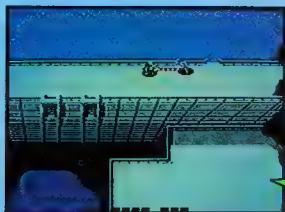
Refuel your weakest turtle inside the dam. Once you destroy the Roof-Walkers, you'll find half a pizza at the top of the ladder.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA

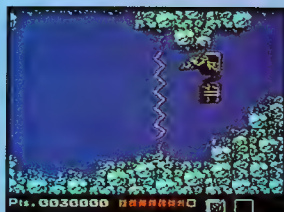
TURTLES



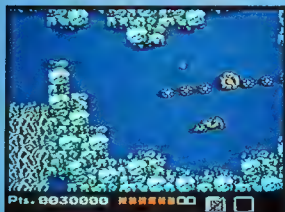
Destroy this last foe near the ceiling, and tackle a whole pizza for lots of energy.



Once you're atop the dam, head for the opening in the highest railing, then dive in.



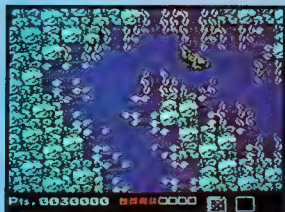
Move quickly during the underwater sequence. Those bombs have short fuses.



To get past this rotating trap, think of it as a revolving door. Follow it around, exiting at the top right corner.



Contact April periodically to find out how many bombs still need to be disarmed.



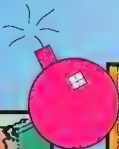
Save one full-energy turtle to use here. The pretty pink seaweed drains energy. And turtles — as everyone knows — are slow swimmers.



Thinking his work day is over, our turtle returns to his sewerific pad for a shower and some hard-earned pizza.



Surprise! The place is a wreck and Master Splinter is gone.

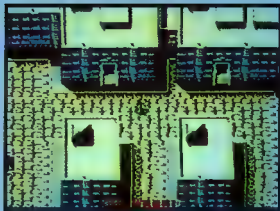


A challenge from Shredder: He dares you to come and rescue Splinter.

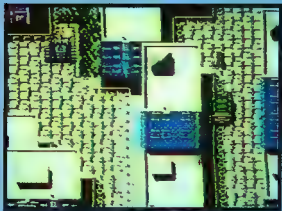
NINTENDO GAME
MONTH



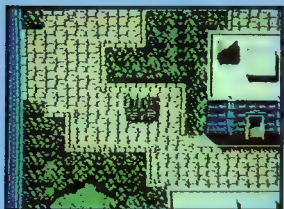
At the start of level 3, drive the Party Wagon to this building for missiles and a whole pizza. You'll need both.



If a turtle has been captured, there's one location on each level where you can rescue him. On level 3, it's the building on the right.



On straightaways, fire a missile — you may get more than one roller tank with it.



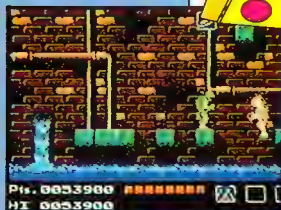
Enter this building to start the final stage of level 3.



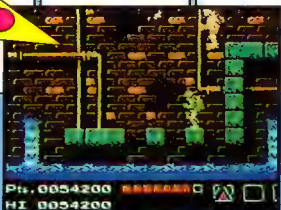
You can use ropes at this stage, but it's faster if you just skip that part.



Don't jump too hard, or you'll fall and be swept away. Just tap the jump button lightly.



Wait for the Fire Freak to fall into the water, then grab the pizza.



If you stand on the left of the block, the Fire Freak will fall into the water without touching you.



This valuable whole pizza keeps reappearing if you climb up and down repeatedly — a great chance to reenergize all your turtles.

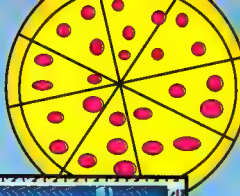


On this screen, use the wall as a shield and Donatello's staff as your preferred weapon.



When you find Splinter, you'll also find Mecaturtle. Be ready for him.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES



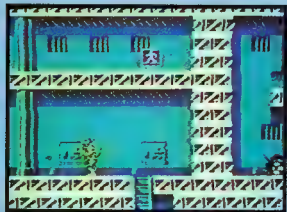
It takes teamwork to defeat Meccaturtle. Mike and his boomerangs are suitable for starters.



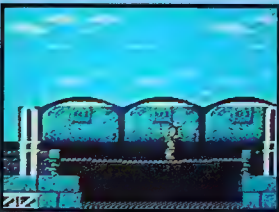
Once you've freed Splinter, he too will give you advice.



Level 4 starts at JFK International Airport. A whole pizza gives you another chance to feed all your turtles.



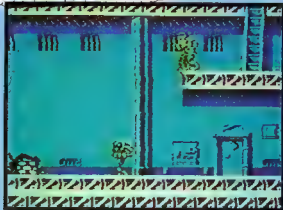
The rope symbol looks like a tight-rope walker. You *must* grab it in order to clear this level.



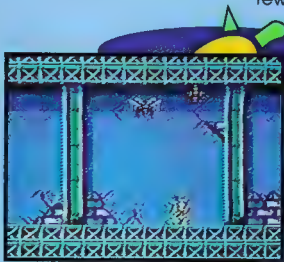
You'll need your ropes as soon as you leave the first building at JFK.



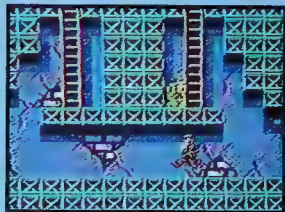
After your tightrope act, you'll be rewarded with half of a pizza.



Use Raphael here — just beyond the robot guard, there's a swarm of flying enemies.

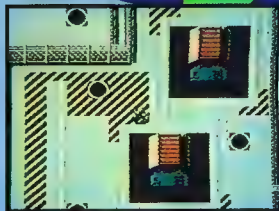


In manhole 2 at JFK, use Donatello's long reach to knock out the lasers on the ceiling.

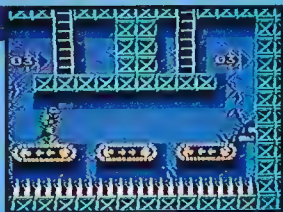


Move from left to right, then hop up and hit downward to destroy this mini-boss.

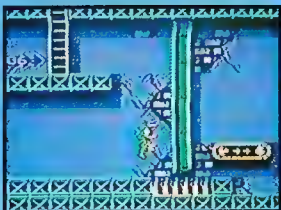
NINTENDO GAME
MONTH



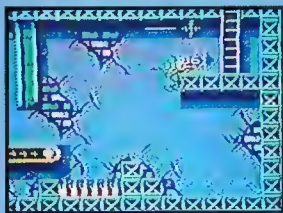
From manhole 2, head for manhole 3, at the upper left.



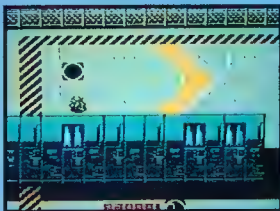
Proceed carefully here — those spikes are deadly. You can jump from the treadmill's shadow as well as from the moving belts themselves.



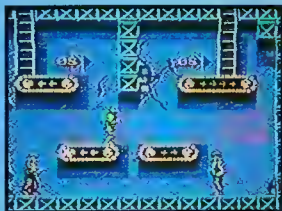
Manhole 3 leads to manhole 6.



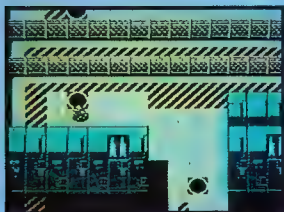
Use Donatello's staff to make quick work of this laser cannon at the end of manhole 6.



Manhole 6 (bottom of screen) leads to manhole 8 (top left).



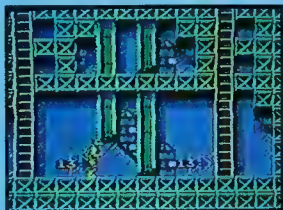
Stay on the treadmill when you enter manhole 8; if you do, you'll be safe.



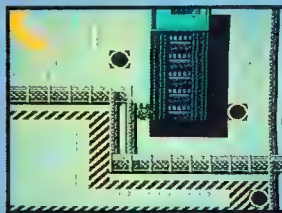
Skip the manhole at the middle right. Instead, head for manhole 9, the third opening you come to.



After leaving manhole 9, you'll have many directions from which to choose. The best choice is manhole 13, at the upper right.



If you lose a turtle on level 4, manhole 13 is where you'll find him.



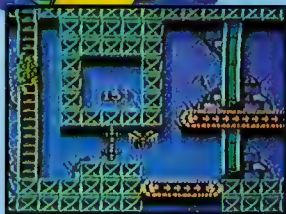
Manhole 14 is next; it's just around the corner.



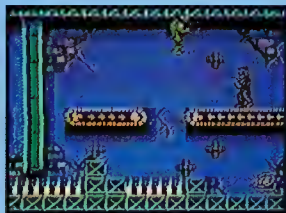
Don't touch the fire — it's deadly. And ignore the magnets — they're just for dramatic effect.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA

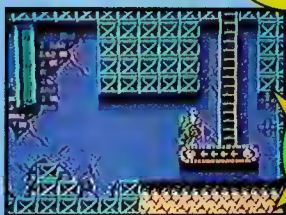
TURTLES



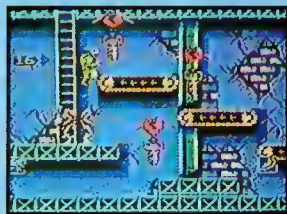
Your next stop is manhole 15. Use Raphael and Donatello to get through here.



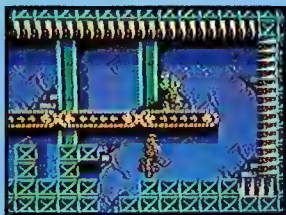
Eliminate *all* of the laser cannons before trying for that delicious-looking pizza at the bottom right.



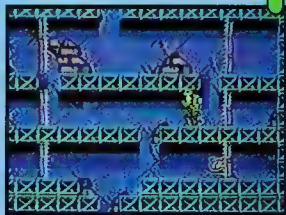
Fire pits, reverse treadmills, and laser guns! Move quickly and smoothly here or *something* will get you.



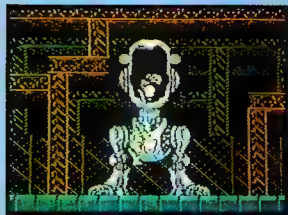
All you want in manhole 16 is the pizza on the right, and the Mr. Invincibility icon on the left. Just ram your way through — don't waste time fighting.



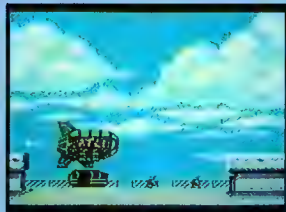
In manhole 17, just ease off the edge of the treadmill, or the spikes will surely get you.



These crushing walls are tricky. Don't move too fast. Use a stop-and-drop technique.



The Big Mouser's vulnerable point is his tonsils. Stand between his eyes and use Donatello or Leonardo's long reach.

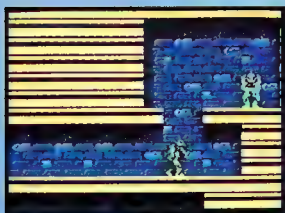


Once you've cleared level 4, the blimp takes you to Shredder's hide-out.

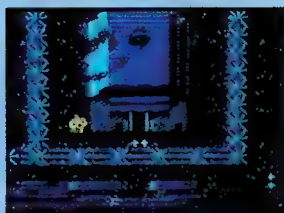


This is where you advance to level 5 to find pizza or rescue captured turtles.

NINTENDO GAME
MONTH



You can locate captured turtles at the end of a long yellow corridor.



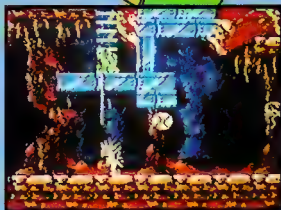
Head northwest to the next building. It contains the weapons you'll need.



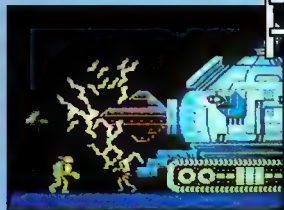
When you climb up and down the stone ladder, boomerangs keep appearing. Stock up on them before your final confrontations.



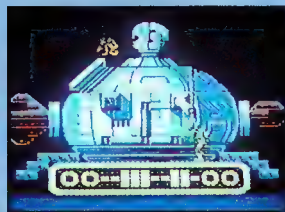
Each turtle can collect up to 99 boomerangs here — better to be safe than sorry.



These enemies are too powerful to defeat in a face-to-face battle. Try attacking them from above.



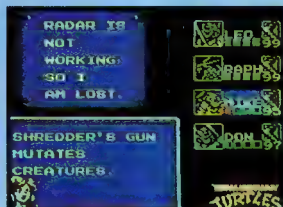
The Technodrome looks fearsome, but you can defeat it if you think strategically.



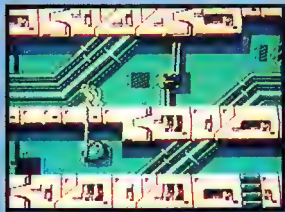
Knock out the gun turrets first, then destroy the hatch from which the soldiers appear.



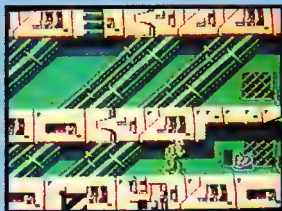
Finally, use your boomerangs to destroy the cyclops eye on top.



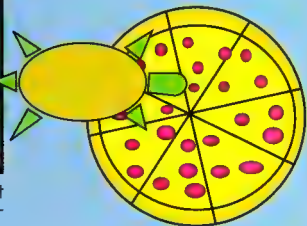
You'll have no map for the final area, due to a "radar breakdown."



You'll eventually have to follow the lower path, so eliminate this gun turret now, from above, when it's much easier to do so.



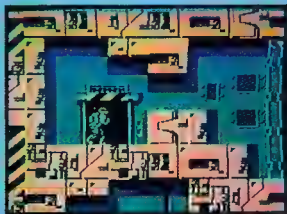
When you reach this pizza, give it to Don — he'll be your most important turtle in the battles that follow.



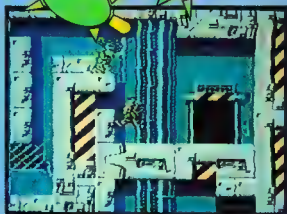
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES



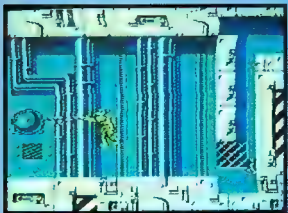
Squat on the ledge and use the bo staff against this foe.



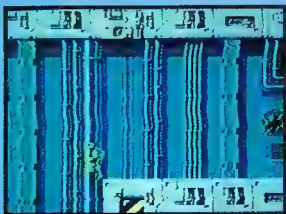
Watch out when you go through this door — there's an enemy on the other side.



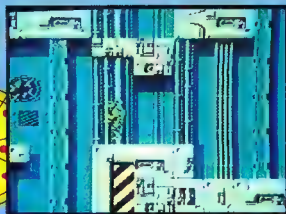
Somersault to the left, then strike from above.



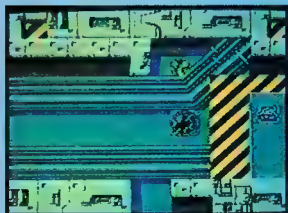
Jump over and smash this wall-mounted turret.



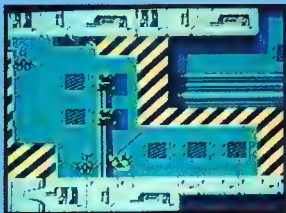
Destroy this cannon with your boomerang, then go left to find the much-needed scrolls.



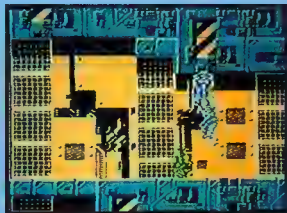
After destroying this cannon, go left and you'll find a whole pizza.



To the right of this cannon, you'll find Mr. Invincibility.

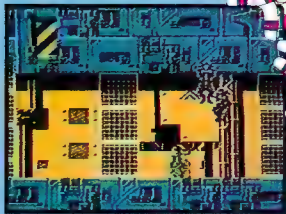


Using Mr. Invincibility, it's a cinch to get through this otherwise difficult section of the game.

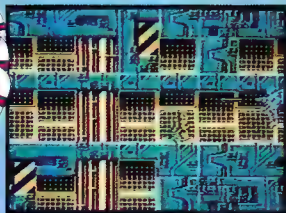


Duck under these laser troopers, then make a run for it. Shredder is near.

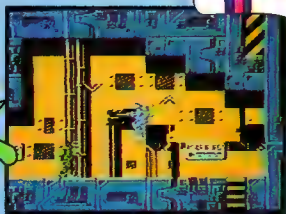
NINTENDO GAME
MONTH



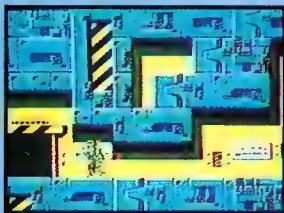
Use boomerangs on the second group of laser troopers.



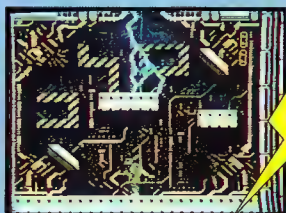
When you reach this narrow corridor, stop and duck as soon as the troopers come on the screen. They'll shoot, miss, and then go away.



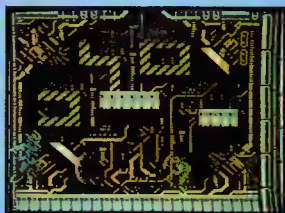
Use scrolls or boomerangs on this flying foe.



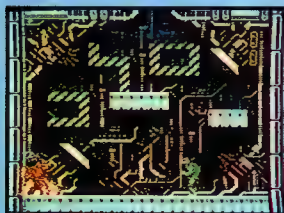
At last! Shredder's lair! Beyond this door lies destiny or doom.



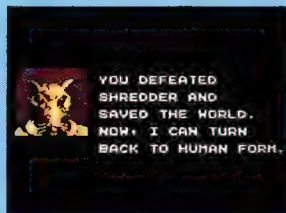
Shredder enters in a bolt of lightning. Stay at the bottom of the screen and be ready.



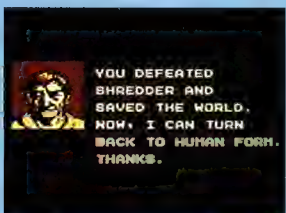
Hurl scrolls at Shredder the instant he touches the ground, and don't let up.



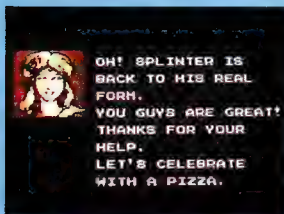
It takes only a few good hits to create a tasty Shredder-melt!



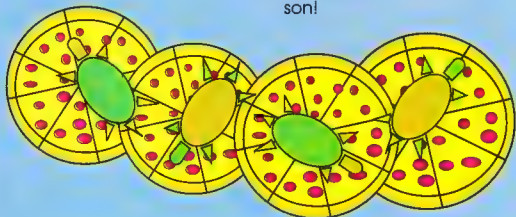
Splinter gives thanks for your victory.



Quite a before-and-after comparison!



And April has her own way of thanking you — with extra sauce!



COMPUTER GAME

of the

MONTH

WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

Gary Meredith

IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory for EGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, and Hercules graphics; 640K for VGA and MCGA; mouse and joystick optional. Broderbund, 17 Paul Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903.



Lock up your valuables — Carmen is back! Yes, the villainous Ms. Sandiego is up to her old tricks. Far from learning her lesson after past misadventures (*Where in the USA is Carmen Sandiego?*, *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?*, et al), she's come up with a brand-new scam.

Carmen and her gang of V.I.L.E. henchmen have broken into a top secret laboratory, and they've stolen the latest model of a revolutionary new time machine. From now on, the present is only a place for Carmen Sandiego to hang her hat. She's got the fourth dimension to plunder, and nothing will be safe until you track her down.

The Time Crime Division of the Acme Detective Agency has recently offered you the position of Time Cadet. OK, so it's the bottom of the ladder. You needed a job anyway, and you've heard that Acme is very generous with promotions for agents who show results. Of course, to show results, you have to solve the cases and live to bring back the crooks. But then, Acme has a very good life insurance plan.

On your first day at work, you arrive at the Acme building to find the place in a dismal state of repair. The elevator (not in the best condition itself) takes you up to Personnel on the second floor, where Diane signs you in. She sends you down the hall, where you collect your Chronoskimmer 325i time machine, and get your first assignment.

In the 325i, you take note of the internal diagnostics program, which is at least a little reassuring. The night before, you had nightmares about badly maintained time machines landing you in the middle of a Mesozoic tar pit, or on the summit of Pompeii, just in time for the fireworks.

On the 325i's information screen, a bulletin suddenly appears. It's the moment of reckoning. Acme Communications Control has intercepted a report of larceny in 19th-century America. Fasten your seat belt, because you're in for a rough ride as you journey through time in pursuit of Carmen Sandiego and her V.I.L.E. gang!

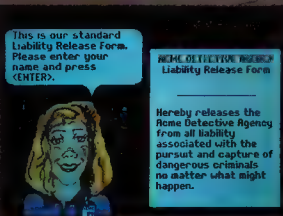
The big trick to solving the crimes is to use your allotted time wisely. When you begin a case, you'll probably want to thoroughly question every witness or informant. If you really get stuck, you may even want to use the scanner. The problem is that you lose some of your allotted time whenever you question someone, check the scanner, use the evidence computer, or make a time jump.



The night skyline of San Francisco is as beautiful as usual. You'd really rather be sleeping, but tomorrow's your first day with Acme, and your nerves are tap dancing tonight.



For some reason, you find yourself hoping that building maintenance is not responsible for taking care of the time skimmers as well.



The personable Diane is your first contact at Acme. She'll get your name on the agents' roster, and the liability release is just a formality. (Yeah, sure it is!)



A Time Patrol Crime Alert, and what a coincidence! You were just reading about Huck, but now the book has vanished from your hands. The past has been altered.



Ah, the simple life of 19th-century America. This might be a nice place to settle down when you finally retire.



The first witness you question leads you to believe that the suspect has already left for an earlier American time period.

After you've collected at least three clues, enter them into the evidence computer and see if you can come up with a suspect. When an arrest warrant is issued, you can forget about finding any more identity clues and concentrate on following the trail of your quarry. From then on, a single clue from a witness will usually be enough to indicate your next time jump. You may want to consult the encyclopedia on the really esoteric clues, but at least that won't use up any of your precious time allotment.



A second informant reinforces your conclusion, but also reveals a physical characteristic that might be useful.



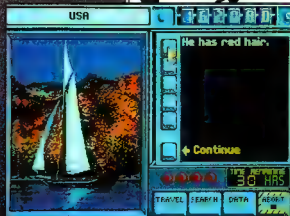
The travel display lists a number of options, but from the clues you already have, you know exactly where your quarry is headed.



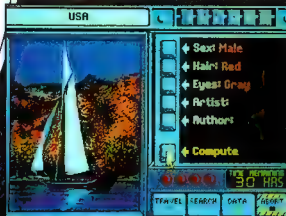
America was even less complicated in 1620. Try not to park your skimmer on Plymouth Rock, as some immigrants will be needing it soon.



Now you have to ask yourself: Just where in the voyage did the suspect stow away on Tasman's ship?



Your informant seems to back up what the witness said. You also discover that the suspect has red hair.



You may have enough of a physical description entered in the evidence computer to pinpoint a suspect. An arrest warrant has been issued for Lee and Bill Ding.

Sometimes a clue or a scanned object won't mean anything, and a search of your reference materials doesn't help, either. When that happens, try checking the travel display. For example, a clue might vaguely suggest something about an Eastern religion, and the travel chart might list England, Holland, and India as possible destinations. Unless you're aware of a Hindu enclave in Amsterdam that the history books missed, your next stop should be India.

Time is of the essence in *Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?*, and you'll be shocked at how quickly it runs out. Normally, the length of time you're allotted is proportional to the difficulty of the case, but not always. After playing, you'll get a better idea of how much time each action takes. As a rule of thumb, time jumps require three to five hours, while the search and data options consume one hour per use.



After getting the warrant papers in order, you make the jump to Holland. The Dutch had an important role in the settling of the New World.



You now know who your suspects are, so all you need is a destination. This witness is only too happy to suggest 17th-century Japan.



Japan, at the height of the shogun rule. It was a country governed by brute force and delicate courtly intrigues.



Since you know Hiram Bingham pursued important archaeological studies of Inca ruins, this clue is all the reason you need to jump to Peru in the early 20th century.



As stories of the great pre-Columbian empires of the Incas and Aztecs spread, the focus of archaeological investigation widened to include the Americas.



The reference to Atahualpa could only mean that your men are headed for the Peru of almost 400 years earlier.

The most powerful weapons you can carry into this titanic battle with the forces of evil are a pencil and paper. Write down every bit of information you get by questioning witnesses or scanning objects. This allows you to put off using the evidence computer until you have enough information to make a positive identification and issue an arrest warrant.

Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego? is a wonderful game and an even better educational tool. You've probably seen more than your share of dry, poorly written history books. Fortunately, it takes only a few minutes of playing *Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?* to set a child's (or adult's) interest and imagination afire.



The death knell of the great Incan empire was sounded when Atahualpa, who refused to accept Christianity, was murdered by the Spanish invaders.



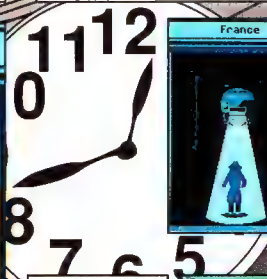
Your witness has good ears, but what are you to make of the clue? Perhaps you should try another source.



Clovis I founded the Frankish Empire in what is now France during the middle of the first millennium A.D. You'd better get going. There's not much time left.



Your instruments detect the presence of Lee and Bill Ding. The capture robot is dispatched and the terrible twins are caught in the beam. Ol' Sam Clemens is bound to be pleased.



If you solve enough cases, you may someday wind up in the Hall of Fame. For now, though, the record of your successes is relegated to the basement at Acme.



France, in A.D. 500, was just becoming an empire. It would eventually progress from the Merovingians to the storied Carolingian empire of Charlemagne.





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W

hat more natural source of inspiration for a computer game could there be than the 1001 tales of the Arabian nights?

The Magic of Scheherazade isn't a literal retelling, but it does borrow its look, atmosphere, and some of its themes from that classic source. The result is a charming game of almost Byzantine complexity.

Once upon a time, Arabia was ruled by demons. One day, a great magician named Isfa appeared, and he harnessed the power of the blue star Airosche to imprison the demons deep inside the Earth. As the game begins, an evil wizard named Sabaron has begun to unleash the demons once again. It's up to you — the last descendant of Isfa — to save Arabia and rescue the beautiful princess Scheherazade. To make the quest much more difficult, Sabaron has erased your magical powers and hurled you into another time period.

Sorting all this out takes time.



The graphics in *The Magic of Scheherazade* are radiant and charming — among the best for Nintendo.

NINTENDO

REVIEWS

THE MAGIC OF SCHEHERAZADE

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Culture Brain, Union Bank Plaza, 445 South Figueroa Street, Suite 2600, Los Angeles, CA 90071.



Scheherazade is an elaborate and involved game that takes time to learn.

In fact, very few Nintendo games take as long to learn as *The Magic of Scheherazade* — it ranks right up there with *Ultima*. The number of items, spells, bonuses, allies, sub-screens, and so forth is truly massive. Happily, everything is clearly organized, so what at first seems unwieldy soon becomes natural and logical.



Magic plays a much greater part in the adventure than swordplay.

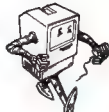
Most players will find *Scheherazade* well worth the time and trouble it takes to learn. For one thing, the graphics are absolutely delightful. There are charming mustachioed brigands who leap out of the shrubbery; colorful djinns and demons; and numerous mosques and town marketplaces to visit. If there's a Nintendo game that's prettier to look at, we haven't seen it.

The monster-hacking in *Scheherazade* plays a decidedly subordinate role to the magic, and some of the special effects that occur when you cast spells are marvelous to behold.

GP



Among the colorful locations you'll visit are marketplace bazaars, waterfronts, and mosques.



STAR SAGA: TWO — THE CLATHRAN MENACE

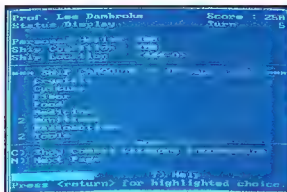
William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 320K minimum memory; CGA, EGA, MCGA, or monochrome graphics. Also available for the Apple II and IIGS. MasterPlay, 6417 Sun State Street, Tampa, FL 33634.

the location of Earth and the Home Worlds. Part of your job is to keep them from doing so.

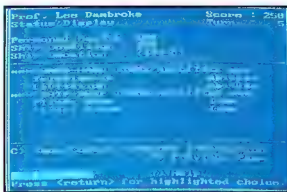
The Clathrans have such vast resources that they have formed a "survey line" across the entire galaxy. It sweeps inexorably forward, and sooner or later they'll find Earth.

In the first stages of the game, you explore, gather intelligence, and engage in trade to build up your ship's military power. As was true in *Star Saga: One*, the most delightful aspects of the game are your encounters with alien cultures. Each planetary landing becomes, in effect, a miniature



Interstellar trade is carried on via a barter system. You'll need extra cargo-drones to amass sufficient wealth and firepower to stop the Clathrans.

adventure unto itself. But eventually there comes a time when you must make a do-or-die attempt to break through the Clathran survey line. This leads to a suitably



During combat, you make no tactical decisions as such—your only options are to fight or run.

wild and apocalyptic grand finale.

There are plenty of bizarre, even droll, incidents throughout the game, but overall *Star Saga: Two* is darker and more sinister than its predecessor. As before, most of the text was written by Sheila Greenberg, and it is first rate in both style and substance. If this woman isn't writing science fiction novels, she ought to be. *Star Saga: Two* is a gem.

GP



ike its predecessor, *Star Saga: Two* is a massive interactive space opera whose storyline is advanced by

more than 50,000 paragraphs of text. If you played *Star Saga: One*, you're probably already standing in line for this sequel—and if you want, you can even continue with your same character.

Newcomers need have no fear of jumping in. *Star Saga: Two* is a self-contained adventure, and the manual makes it easy to get started. Throughout the game, your faithful CGM (Computer Game Master) keeps track of where you are, what you do next, and what items or abilities you've managed to acquire.

No matter which of the six characters you choose to portray, you'll start at the Galactic Arm, seeking information about an invading race known as the Clathrans. The viciousness of the Clathrans is matched only by their implacable (and mysterious) hatred of humans. Fortunately, the Clathrans have not yet pinpointed



The computer plots your moves, then directs you to the relevant passages of text that propel the story along.



REVIEWS

SHOOT 'EM UP CONSTRUCTION KIT

Arlan R. Levitan

Version reviewed: Amiga. Also available for the Commodore 64. Advantage/Accolade, 550 S. Winchester Blvd., Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95128.

continuously, or scrolled by the movement of your hero.

With *Shoot 'Em Up's* Sound Editor, you can assign sounds to objects. You can use the sounds supplied with the three sample games, or add any digitized sound stored in IFF file format.

The Attack Wave Editor determines which enemies will appear on each level and the paths they

will follow. If you feel like battling the Mongol hordes, large formations of individual foes can be combined to attack en masse.

The Player Limitations Editor lets you control the variables that determine the overall playability of the game. It's also a godsend for those with less than lightning-quick reflexes. Heroes can be granted additional speed, up to ten lives, and more firepower.

A Test Game option lets you try your creation without exiting the editors. There's a normal mode and a cheat mode that gives you unlimited lives.

When you're done, you can share stand-alone versions of the game with your friends. *Shoot 'Em*



If you've dreamed of writing the ultimate arcade game, but you don't want to spend months learning how to program a computer, help has arrived. *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit* allows you to design your own action games without writing a line of code — or even touching a keyboard.

Shoot 'Em Up consists of several powerful mouse-driven editors that let you control virtually every aspect of a typical arcade-style game. The Sprite Editor, for instance, allows you to create and modify your own heroes, nasties, projectiles, and explosions. Then,

Typical of the many editor screens in *Shoot 'Em Up* is the Sprite Editor, which allows you to design your own characters.



using the Object Editor, you can add animation by telling the program to quickly flip through a series of sprites.

The Background Editor lets you create a battlefield for your melee. The Level Editor lets you determine which backgrounds should be associated with each level of the game. Each level's backdrop can be fixed, scrolled

By flipping through a series of sprite shapes with the Object Editor, you can create animated sequences.



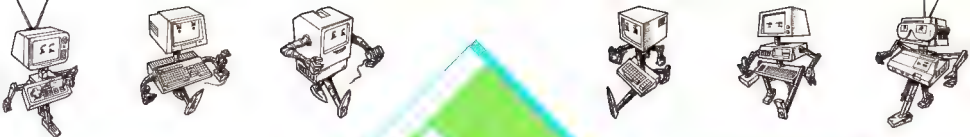
GP



Psychoblast is one of the three sample games included with the package.

Up even lets you use any 32-color, 320 x 200-pixel picture as a title screen.

Although building a polished, playable arcade game won't take months, don't expect to knock off a masterpiece in a few hours. Creating an original game that will stand the test of repeated play may take days or weeks.

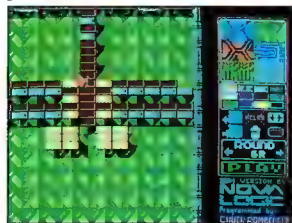


When Taito introduced the first *Arkanoid* — a spiffy-looking update of the antediluvian *Breakout* games from the early 1980s — some

industry observers thought the idea was crazy. Despite its bright graphics, power capsules, and (rather silly) space-alien theme, the basic concept of *Arkanoid* was unchanged: You still had to swat bouncing balls into walls of colored bricks with a paddle. Surely, the pundits claimed, we've outgrown such simplistic pastimes.

Well, evidently not. The resounding success of *Arkanoid* proved that plenty of people actually *enjoy* batting walls of blocks with an "energy ball." Let the pop psychologists figure out why it's so much fun, but it undeniably is — and Taito has the sales figures to prove it.

Arkanoid II: The Revenge of Doh features even more (and more interesting) power capsules and walls. In all, there are 67 stages, and the walls are arranged in even more challenging and complex patterns.

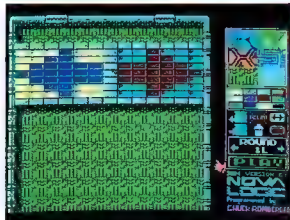


The construction set lets you customize walls, colors, and special features.

REVIEWS

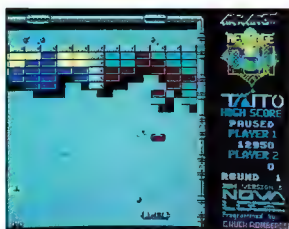
ARKANOID II: THE REVENGE OF DOH

William R. Trotter



Customized screens can be tested by placing the hand-shaped pointer over Play and pressing the fire button or Enter key.

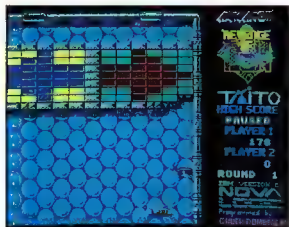
However, what sets this sequel apart from the original game more than anything else is the *Arkanoid Construction Set* that's included. Now you can modify the existing screens or create an entire series of new ones, using the



When showers of power capsules pour down, the trick is to spot the most valuable capsule and get to it quickly.

design, special features, power capsules, and even background colors of your choice. With some imagination, and a little time to kill, you can create some really strange screens with this feature.

Arkanoid II is fresh enough to be a genuine sequel, not merely a rehash of a proven hit. It's still as addictive as ever, and the construction set should prove a winning attraction to the game's legion of fans. Those who haven't played the original *Arkanoid* (or *Breakout*) need not worry. These little gems are about as easy to get into as any computer game on the market. The hard part is knowing when to stop.



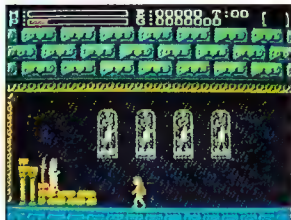
Arkanoid II has the same vivid graphics and smooth game play that made the original game so appealing.

GP



T

alk about being in the wrong place at the wrong time! Returning from an adventure, you find your hometown, Eolis, practically deserted. The life source of your people — a fountain inside the town walls — is poisoned and drying up. The king asks for your help.



See the guru before quitting a game. He'll give you passwords that let you continue later.

Strange things are happening elsewhere, too. Your town is near the World Tree, which contains villages and fortresses inhabited by different races. The World Tree is being bombarded by meteorites and chaos reigns inside. Dwarfs are stealing from elves, monsters are running free, and wickedness is rampant. The turmoil is caused by the Evil One, who lives in a palace within the tree.

To restore order, you must complete several missions. Not only must you find a new water source for Eolis, but you must also find an antidote for the poison in the water. In addition, you must

NINTENDO REVIEWS

FAXANADU

Leslie Mizell

Version reviewed: Nintendo, Nintendo of America, 4820 150th Avenue NE, P.O. Box 957, Redmond, WA 98052.



One branch of the World Tree leads to the castle.

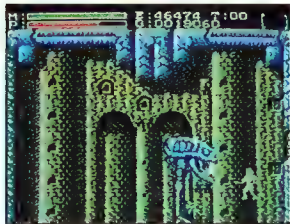
venture inside the chaotic World Tree and try to destroy the Evil One.

One by one, you must visit each town within the tree and question the people who live there. As the game progresses, you'll work your way upward through the two trunk towns, Apolune and Forepaw; the two mist towns, Mascom and Victim; and the two branch towns, Conflate and Day-

break. Finally you'll reach Dartmoor, where you'll find Zenis, the fortress of the Evil One.

In each town, you can visit various locations — saloons, hospitals, gymnasiums, and six other types of places — to receive information or passwords and to buy weapons, magic, armor, food, and keys. There are four different types each of swords, armor, and shields, depending on your experience. There are five types of magic spells: deluge, fire, thunder, death, and tilt. Other useful items include the pendant, which increases your attacking power, and the hourglass, which can stop your enemy for a brief time.

Does all this sound familiar? Although *Faxanadu* is a good game, it falls short of the standard set by *Ultima*, *Dragon Warrior*, *Shadowgate*, the *Zelda* adventures, and many other role-playing games now being released for Nintendo. Very little in *Faxanadu* will seem original or unique to experienced gamers, and the game is hurt by its cluttered graphics.



To defeat the last boss, jump up and down in one spot while rapidly throwing your sword.

GP



ould you rather go through life as a muscular barbarian, a vengeful dwarf, or a voluptuous blonde?

That's one of the first decisions to make when you play *Golden Axe*. It's a strong adaptation of Sega's hit arcade game, with comparable graphics, the same background story, and identical characters. You can play the role of Axe Battler, an overdeveloped barbarian; Gilius Thunderhead, a noxious dwarf; or Tyris Flare, a ravishing but lethal Amazon. In the two-player mode, you and a friend can each play a different character and take part in the action simultaneously.



You've got three different characters to choose from, and they're all tough fighters who have a bone to pick with the evil Death Adder.

All the characters have two things in common. First, they've lost loved ones at the hands of the evil Death Adder, so they're bent on revenge. And second, they are relentless warriors who don't know the meaning of the word fear.

SEGA

REVIEWS

GOLDEN AXE

Tom R. Halfhill

Version reviewed: Sega Genesis.
Sega of America, 573 Forbes Blvd.,
P.O. Box 2167, South San Francisco,
CA 94080.

Before you can face Death Adder in a final showdown at his castle, however, you must fight your way through droves of lesser enemies. Your foes include armored knights, skeleton swordsmen, fire-breathing dragons, sumo wrestlers, brutal Vikings, and hostile women. Your weapons include axes, swords, parts of your own body, and magic.

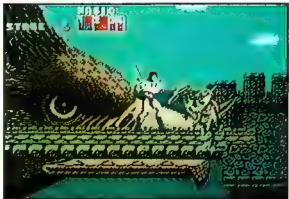
One odd feature of *Golden Axe* — particularly in a game that places so much emphasis on hand-to-hand combat — is that the con-

trol buttons don't necessarily control specific character movements. For example, one button controls magic, another controls attack, and a third controls jumps. But when you press the attack button during a fight, your character might respond by swinging a sword or axe, kicking the opponent in the midsection, or flinging the opponent across the screen. You have no specific control over these individual actions — when you press the attack button, the game decides which response is appropriate. However, there are special combinations of buttons you can press to unleash particularly lethal blows.



Sometimes the best way to deal with a screenful of annoying enemies is to call forth some magic. The results can be explosive.

Golden Axe's arcade heritage is obvious. It's a straightforward kill-or-be-killed slugfest that's designed to drain your pockets of quarters. If you like games with more subtlety and strategy, look elsewhere. But if you like the arcade version of *Golden Axe*, you're almost certain to like this version. It's a faithful translation that successfully captures the spirit of a dynamite arcade game.



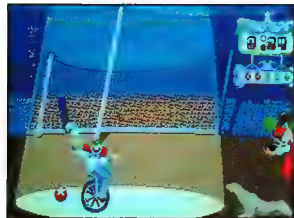
Part of the adventure takes place on the back of a giant eagle. Don't wander too far — it's a long fall.

GP



Did you ever dream of running away and joining the circus? Of flying through the air on a trapeze, or maybe walking a tight-rope? Here's your chance to try those stunts and four other events without taking out any extra life insurance.

In *Fiendish Freddy's Big Top o' Fun*, you're the manager of a small circus. Barnum and Bailey it isn't. In fact, if you can't repay a \$10,000 loan immediately, you're going to lose the business — Big Top and all. But you're not worried. You've got talented performers, and



Maneuver your unicycle under the objects. You can juggle them from one hand to another — until Freddy shows up.

crowds will surely pour in.

Unfortunately, you didn't count on *Fiendish Freddy* — a clown your creditors hired to make sure you *couldn't* pay back the loan. Freddy is determined to sabotage the acts of your best performers. If Horace is practicing his high dives into a tiny barrel of water, you can depend on Freddy to appear with a fan and blow Horace off target.

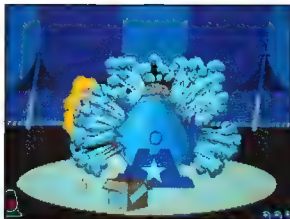
REVIEWS

FIENDISH FREDDY'S BIG TOP O' FUN

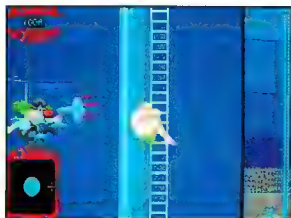
Leslie Mizell

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color or monochrome graphics; joystick optional, but recommended. Also available for the Amiga and Atari ST. Mindscape, 3444 Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL 60062.

Freddy's other nasty tricks include throwing bombs for Jeffy-Joe to juggle with the bowling pins, balls, and babies; threatening Finola the trapeze artist with a pair



Fernando, the human cannonball, becomes a pile of gunpowder when Freddy plugs up his act with a cork.



Your high dive can be going smoothly until Freddy blows you off course with his high-powered fan.

of scissors; tossing smoke bombs into the ring while you're throwing knives at Knancy Knife; hurling blades at Tony Tiptoe, the tight-rope walker, leaving him only half a man; and corking the cannon so the human cannonball is blown to smithereens.

Fiendish Freddy's Big Top o' Fun is a unique idea, and the graphics (especially in VGA mode) are great. However, the game probably has limited appeal. Mastering each event requires a certain knack, but none of them is too difficult to learn, especially if you take advantage of the practice mode before you play. So once you've mastered all six events, the challenge is gone (although you're never sure just when Freddy will show up, so your score and cash total are always in jeopardy).

Still, up to five people can compete against Freddy and each other, and it's a perfect game for kids. The violence is of the bounce-back-from-the-9,000-foot-drop variety featured in cartoons.

No matter how you play *Fiendish Freddy*, it's diverting fun for the clown in all of us.



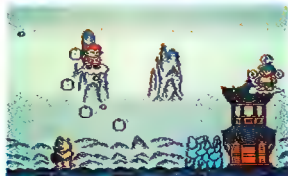
SEGA

REVIEWS

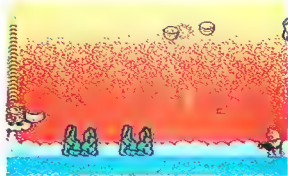
CLOUD MASTER

Matthew A. Firme

Version reviewed: Sega. Sega, Tonka. 6000 Clearwater Drive. Minnetonka, MN 55343



Lightning Boy, the middle boss in round 1, attacks with lightning bolts.



In round 5, you'll be attacked from all sides. Watch the Piggoid, and try to destroy the formations of dumplings.

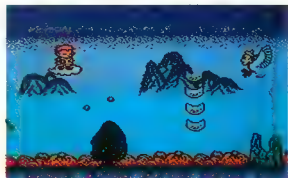
noodles; and fight such bosses as Lightning Boy and Bad Buddha.

Chen's main weapon is Ki force, little balls he shoots from his

fingertips. Occasionally powerjars appear, augmenting his force. A few times each round Chen can enter a door, where a girl lets him pick one of four special weapons.

The scenery is colorful and distinctly oriental in style and subject, reminiscent of a classical Chinese painting. The screen scrolls slowly from left to right as Chen soars over each land. His enemies fly or remain on the ground below, most shooting at him, others circling and diving toward him. As a result, the air becomes thick with foes and projectiles, and the main strategy is to dodge and shoot, dodge and shoot.

This pattern changes very little from round to round. In fact, although each round offers some scenery changes and a few new faces, the action remains so constant that it soon becomes tiresome.



The Kanton Man flies toward you, then pulls back and fires.

The story of *Cloud Master* is endearing, as are the gentle characters and graphics. But ultimately the repetitive action becomes tedious. Once the charm of the story and graphics wears off, the game play may not be enough to hold your interest.

GP

C

hinese legend has it that when the Earth was young there lived a mysterious hermit named Michael Chen.

He meditated alone in the mountains of central China for many years, studying the powerful knowledge of the ancients, building his strength and mastery. When he was ready, he mounted a cloud and set out through the skies, hoping to learn the secrets of the five lands and become the Cloud Master, a powerful mystic. But the forces of evil guarded their secret powers jealously, and Chen was soon confronted by legions of enemies.



Once you've beaten a "middle boss," you can enter a power chamber and select one of four special weapons.

So begins Sega's new Master System game, *Cloud Master*. The story line is refreshingly light and original, as are the enemies Chen faces. As the hopeful young hermit soars above the Chinese countryside, he must battle formations of pig heads, shumai (shrimp dumplings), and mushrooms; dodge flying bowls of ramen



NINTENDO

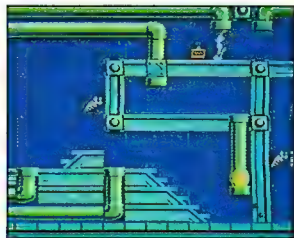
REVIEWS

THE BUGS BUNNY CRAZY CASTLE

Lisa Farthing

Version reviewed: Nintendo.
Kemco-Seiko, 20000 Mariner Avenue,
Suite 100, Torrance, CA 90503.

Carrots are found in various nooks and crannies on each level. To advance, Bugs must collect all the carrots. There are basically three types of levels: those with lots of stairs, those with lots of doors, and those with lots of pipes. The pipes provide Bugs a quick way to get out of trouble (and sometimes into trouble). All he has



Try to drink the carrot juice when an enemy is nearby. It makes you invisible so you can walk right over him, but it only works for a few seconds.

to do is jump up or down into a pipe, and he'll be transported to a new spot — preferably near carrots or weapons.

The Bugs Bunny Crazy Castle is ideal for novices and younger players. The graphics are fairly good, and though the game is short on creativity, it's fun. Pushing an object onto an unsuspecting Sylvester is definitely a lark.

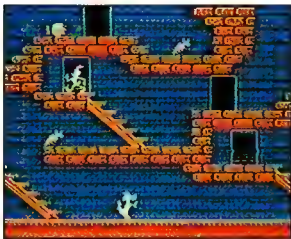
The similarity between levels is disappointing, however. There's not enough variety or difference in difficulty to motivate players to move all the way to the 60th level. Some screens are trickier than others, but all can be conquered with relative ease. *The Bugs Bunny Crazy Castle* will challenge beginners, but probably won't hold the interest of more sophisticated gamers.

GP

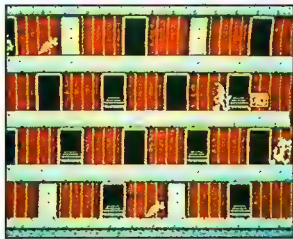
Bugs Bunny has long been known for his wit and his ability to get himself out of a pinch. Now, trapped in a castle, he has to wiggle his way through 60 levels' worth of close calls to reach his beloved Honey Bunny.

In *The Bugs Bunny Crazy Castle*, Sylvester the cat, Daffy Duck, Wile E. Coyote, and Yosemite Sam all gang up against Bugs. One touch from any of these cartoon characters and Bugs is a goner. Fortunately, Bugs starts each game with five lives. After his fifth life, a password option allows you to resume play on any level you've already completed.

To defend himself, Bugs can don boxing gloves, drink carrot juice for invisibility, and push large objects onto his rival cartoon critters. Most of the time, though, Bugs can simply outrun his foes, who move at the speed of a fast walk.



Head for the boxing glove first. It's your only protection. Save it as a last resort though, because you can use it only once.



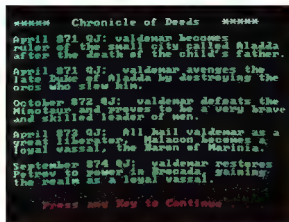
The safe, water bucket, crate, and weight are handy objects to push onto unsuspecting enemies.



SWORD OF ARAGON

William R. Trotter

Most war strategy games are, by their very nature, fantasy games as well. How else should you describe a game in which you step into the boots of Napoleon, the tanks of Patton, or the armor of Alexander the Great? Since war games are actually a variation of the fantasy role-playing genre, why not combine role playing with a military campaign of epic proportions?



If you need a quick ego boost, the *Chronicle of Deeds* provides an updated account of your victories.

That's just what Strategic Simulations has done in *Sword of Aragon*. Add a dash of *Genghis Khan* to a cupful of *El Cid* and a sprinkling of *The Ancient Art of War*, and the result is *Sword of Aragon*. Although it borrows a few ingredients from its predecessors, it also transcends those influences and establishes a hybrid genre all its own.

The basic premise is straightforward. The proud Duke of Aladda was treacherously ambushed by orcs, and he passed along a great responsibility to you, his only son. Your task is to restore the once-great empire of Aragon

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 384K minimum memory; CGA, VGA, EGA, or Hercules graphics. Soon to be released for the Commodore 64 and Amiga. SSI (distributed by Electronic Arts), 675 Almaden Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086



You must take care of your cities' economic development and defensive security, or your battlefield triumphs may go for naught.

by defeating the demonic hordes that now rule the land from the great citadel of Tetrada.

You begin with a run-down little city, a small but stalwart little army, and a modest treasury. You must wage campaigns in an ever-widening radius around your

capital city, while constantly tending to the economic development of your territories. In this game, armies are not conjured out of thin air (at least not until your wizards attain a very advanced level of skill!), but must be raised, equipped, fed, and paid every month out of a treasury whose contents are vulnerable to crop failures, bad weather, and goblin raids. The arms and tactics are basically those of the late Middle Ages, just before the advent of gunpowder.



Battles take place on detailed tactical screens. The animated graphics are very pleasing.

The fantasy elements are nicely interwoven with the more realistic details, and some of the spells cast by your mages and priests have rather odd and subtle influences on the campaigns.

Although the game is fairly difficult to learn, the basic system is clean and eminently playable. You can jump right in after a quick perusal of the manual—provided you don't mind undergoing some fairly bloody on-the-job training.

Sword of Aragon is billed as an epic, and for once that claim is not mere hype. This is a breakthrough game: strong, fresh, compelling, and great fun to play.

GP



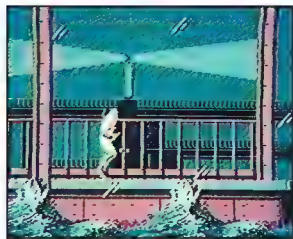
R

venge of Shinobi applies incredible 16-bit graphics to an otherwise ordinary martial arts adventure. Even if you've had your fill of

ninja-on-the-warpath games, stick around for this one. Chances are you've never seen anything like it in a home videogame.

The story is simple enough. Shinobi, an enraged ninja warrior, seeks vengeance for a wrong he's endured. He moves through a beautiful yet hostile world where each and every person he meets is trying desperately to kill him. Shinobi has no choice — he must destroy them first.

And boy, can he destroy them! Of course, one drawback to being a ninja warrior is the travel required. Shinobi must go where the work is. That's why the game follows him from exotic oriental locales to shipyards, junkyards, war



Shinobi runs past a storm-tossed sea on his way to fight the next enemy. The improved graphics show vivid details and dimension.

SEGA

REVIEWS

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Phill Powell

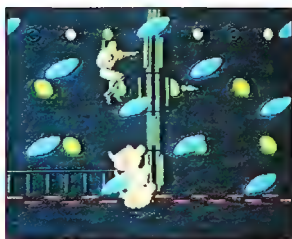
Version reviewed: Sega Genesis
Sega of America, 573 Forbes Blvd.,
P.O. Box 2167, South San Francisco,
CA 94080.

zones, and waterfalls.

He can't afford to be picky about how he gets there, either. Sometimes he rides atop a subway train or an 18-wheeler. One scene finds him catching a lift on a transport plane. Occasionally you'll see him walking alongside a busy highway, apparently hitchhiking. Wherever he shows up, enemies abound. His journeys are nothing if not action-packed.

Four skill levels let you decide how much of this you can take. Another option allows you to choose which buttons control your kicking and jumping. These features are helpful and enhance your enjoyment of the game.

But make no mistake about it — *Revenge of Shinobi's* greatest achievement is its graphics. The game has large, detailed characters and multilayered back-



This isn't a party. This isn't a disco. And Shinobi isn't fooling around.

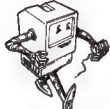
grounds that create a three-dimensional feel. When Shinobi walks past a bamboo fence, you also see the building behind it. Further back, there's a forest. As Shinobi moves, the scenery scrolls proportionately, so it looks genuine.

No details were ignored when the graphics were designed for this game. *Revenge of Shinobi* packs a visual punch that must be seen to be believed.

GP



When Shinobi arrives in Chinatown, a welcoming committee gathers, no doubt to tell him which restaurants are the best.



NINTENDO

REVIEWS

ALL-PRO BASKETBALL

Phill Powell

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Vic Tokai, Torrance Tech Park, 370 Amapola Avenue, Suite 104, Torrance, CA 90501.



On the two-player dunk screen, nothing is guaranteed.

team.

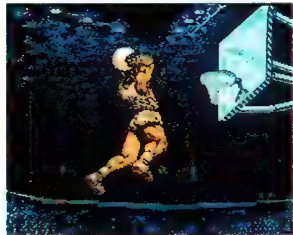
When you're ready to take the court, you can choose from eight fictional teams. There aren't many noticeable differences between the teams, although the computer will usually pick New York if you don't.

Once you begin the game and settle into the action, you'll discover that *All-Pro Basketball* asks you to make major adjustments to your thinking about professional basketball. To begin with, the game is played half-court style. It wants

to seem like a full-court simulation, however, so it shifts court halves with every change in possession. Unfortunately, this interrupts the action and creates mass confusion, as players who were running up the right side of the court are now seen hustling up the left side.

Another problem involves the graphics, which do little to clarify the visual chaos. The tiny players all have the same profile, and the basketball is orange on the dunk screen and white in regular play.

You may be tempted to write off this game, but wait. Just when



Sometimes there's just no defense against the power slam.

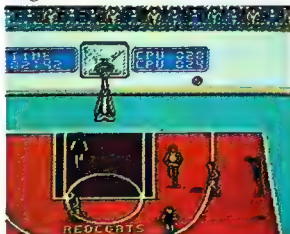
you think *All-Pro Basketball* has little to offer, up pops the dunk screen. This is where the fun is. As your player glides toward the hoop, the screen switches to an enlarged, slow motion view of the power dunk in all its glory. It's a beautiful moment. In fact, it's possible to get hooked on *All-Pro Basketball* solely for these scenes. Somehow, the game's problems fade into the backcourt as you double-pump the B button and close in on that colossal slam.

GP

Y

ou want a thankless job? Try designing a videogame based on a sport. It may sound easy, but think about it. When designing an original game, you can invent rules to make the game as playable as possible. But you can't change a sport — its rules are too well known.

This is the dilemma that haunts *All-Pro Basketball*. It tries to remain faithful to the real game but has some problems bringing the big league to the small screen.



Outside shots are a risky proposition in *All-Pro Basketball*.

You can play *All-Pro Basketball* by yourself or with a friend. In the two-player mode, however, you don't compete against each other; instead, you join forces against the computer's team. Another mode allows you to watch the computer play itself. This is highly recommended when starting out, because it gives you a feel for the way the electronic mind coaches its



S

omebody always seems bent on taking over the world. Before long, these would-be conquerors will have to start taking numbers. In *Clash at Demonhead*, a gang called the Lawbreakers has kidnapped Professor Plum, a famous nuclear scientist. To carry out their mad plot, the Lawbreakers have forced the professor to develop a powerful atomic bomb. As Bang, a member of the Tigers, it's your job to rescue the professor, disarm the bomb, and save the world.

You must also find one of your cohorts who's already missing in action. With so many places to search and so many opponents to defeat, it seems hopeless. But don't despair. Many other characters in the game are willing to help you, and there are secret shortcuts that save time. You can pick up items that provide extra energy, and money and gold to buy armament and extra powers.



You'll need split-second timing when jumping across these platforms. One wrong step and you'll visit the cave of horrors.

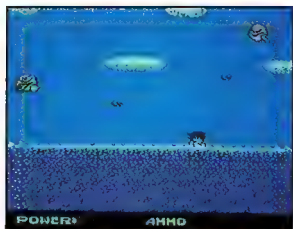
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NINTENDO

REVIEWS

CLASH AT DEMONHEAD

Gary Meredith

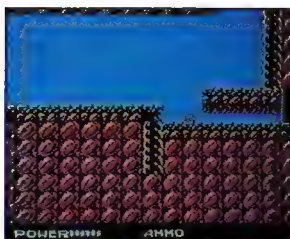
Version reviewed: Nintendo. Vic.
Tokai, 370 Amapola Avenue,
Torrance Tech Park, Suite 104,
Torrance, CA 90501.



Don't bother to fight. All it takes is some Olympic-class swimming to deal with these guys.

Last — but certainly not least — a wise old hermit will grant you his special powers. These include the abilities to shrink yourself or to teleport to other locations. You'll need all five special powers to beat the seven bosses in the game.

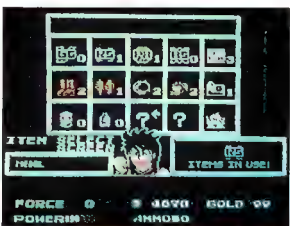
You'll probably use the password feature quite often in *Clash at Demonhead*. There are plenty of



Aren't you glad the hermit gave you Micro Power, and aren't you clever for thinking of using it now?

hazards, and it's almost impossible to get through them all without lots of experimenting. For example, it takes perfect timing to negotiate the floating, constantly moving platforms. One misstep, and you'll fall into the abyss. And some bosses are invulnerable to standard weapons. Max, for instance, not only grows when he's hit by your blasts, but also divides into more creatures, until finally you're overwhelmed.

Clash at Demonhead is fun, with a slightly odd sense of humor. It can be a frustrating game, too, when it demands perfect timing and creative problem solving.



A key strategy is knowing which item to use, and when to use it. The various bosses react differently to each weapon.

GP



ormally a solar eclipse is nothing to fear. A few fanatics might predict the end of the world, but otherwise there's no reason to

worry. Unless, that is, you're an archaeologist who has discovered an ancient prophecy of doom.

On an expedition to Egypt, you've recovered some hidden scrolls from the tomb of Hahmid III. One of the scrolls promises that anything coming between the sun and his tomb will be destroyed. Since all of Hahmid III's other prophecies eventually came true, this one can't be discounted.



You begin the adventure outside Hahmid III's tomb, near a landing strip with a biplane and a door leading into the pyramid.

What's so ominous about this prophecy, however, is that a total eclipse of the sun is about to occur over Cairo. If Hahmid III's curse holds true, the moon will be destroyed when it passes between the Earth and the sun. And if the moon is destroyed, the disruption on Earth will be cataclysmic.

Your mission, then, is to destroy Hahmid III's tomb. If you do



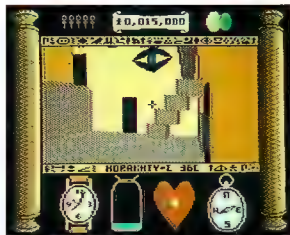
TOTAL ECLIPSE

Neil Randall

Version reviewed: Commodore 64.
Also available for IBM, Tandy, and compatibles (with 512K minimum memory and CGA or EGA graphics); the Commodore Amiga, and Atari ST. Cinemaware, 4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91362.

so before 10 a.m. (when the eclipse reaches totality), the curse may be averted. You have two hours to complete the task, equipped with only a watch, a water bottle, a compass, and a gun. You'll also need some luck, because once you're inside the pyramid, weird things start to happen.

Total Eclipse uses the game



Once inside, you'll find yourself in a maze of passageways and rooms. Watch your step—a fatal fall means a quick end to the game.



Pay attention to the clock (bottom left) and other indicators. This adventurer isn't going to make it very far with an empty water bottle (bottom center).

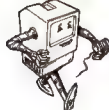
system first introduced in Epyx's *Space Station Oblivion*. Known as Freescape, this system gives you a straight-ahead view of the scene in front of you. You can look up, down, and sideways, and move in various directions by pressing the appropriate key. To pick up objects, simply walk into them.

As good as this system is, though, it is somewhat frustrating to play. For one thing, the changes of view are too slow. It feels as if you're crawling through the tomb, and jerkily at that. Because of this, sometimes you press keys you shouldn't have pressed, and you end up doing something you hadn't intended.

The other problem is the view itself. There is virtually no peripheral vision, so you can't take in a whole room in one glance. In a way, the game's laudable attempt at realism works against itself.

Eventually, however, you can adjust to these difficulties until the movements become second nature. At that point, *Total Eclipse* becomes good, solid fun — not a great game, but a good one.

GP



NINTENDO REVIEWS

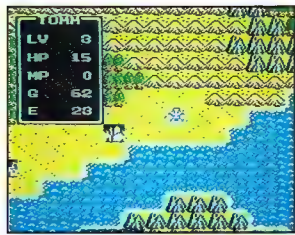
DRAGON WARRIOR

Tom R. Halfhill

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Nintendo of America, 4820 150th Avenue NE, P.O. Box 957, Redmond, WA 98073.

Dragon Warrior typifies the new breed of sophisticated Nintendo games. A fantasy role-playing epic, it demands almost no dexterity at all. Instead of pitting the superior speed of a machine against your human reflexes, *Dragon Warrior* requires patience and strategic thinking.

The story takes place in Alefgard, a land populated by knights, dragons, magicians, and all manner of monsters. Long ago, the brave warrior Erdrick used magical balls of light to free the land from darkness. Generations



The status window (left) shows your level, hit points, magic points, gold, and experience.

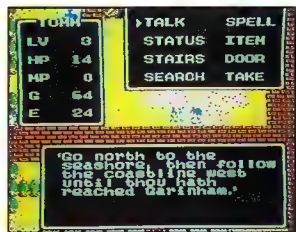
later, the evil Dragonlord stole the balls of light and once again plunged Alefgard into darkness and terror. According to a seer, Alefgard can be saved only by a descendant of Erdrick. Could you be Erdrick's heir to glory?

When the game begins, the king sends you forth on your quest. Your travels take you throughout Alefgard to forests, mountains, plains, swamps, towns, and —

eventually — to Charlock, the Dragonlord's lair.

Along the way, you meet numerous people and encounter many dangerous monsters. It's important to speak with everyone you meet, because they often provide valuable clues. It helps to jot down these clues for later reference.

When you encounter a monster, you can either run or fight.



The command window (top) lets you select actions. Be sure to talk to everyone you meet in order to gather important clues.

Fighting is simply a matter of selecting the Fight command from a menu — no arcade skills are required. Each exchange of blows subtracts hit points from both you and the monster. If you run out of hit points before the monster does, you're dead and the game's over. If you win, you're rewarded with experience points and gold.

As you gain experience points, you advance to higher levels and grow stronger. By accumulating gold, you can buy tools, more powerful weapons, and better armor. The key to winning is to avoid challenging the Dragonlord until you are very strong, have lots of experience fighting monsters, and are well equipped. Since this takes many hours of play, *Dragon*



When a monster appears, you can either run or fight. Combat requires no coordination — just select the Fight command.

Warrior lets you save up to three games in progress.

Dragon Warrior is patterned after the role-playing games that have been available on personal computers for years. Although it lacks certain details — you can't design your own character, and only one person can play at a time — it's an excellent rendition of a popular theme.

GP



ou've loaded the new game into your PC. A few key-strokes later, you're startled by an ominous rumble. Sud-

denly, a huge, jovial man bursts through your wall. As the last bits of plaster fall onto the floor, you recognize his round, cheerful face. It's John Madden, but he's not selling beer. He's ready for action with his very own gridiron simulation.

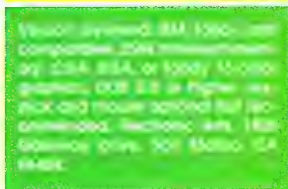
The former coach of the Oakland Raiders sees winning at football as the natural result of sound decision making. That's why you'll feel more realism in *John Madden Football* than in other games in which random elements often decide the results.

John Madden Football can accommodate many levels of involvement. For instance, your first of many choices is between game formats. The Quick Game limits you to nine plays each for offense and defense, but allows you to forego the lengthy setup of the



JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL

Phill Powell



Standard Game.

Next, you assemble your roster. Your ten choices include teams modeled on the Pittsburgh and (of course) Oakland dynasties of the 1970s, as well as the Chicago and San Francisco powerhouses of the

1980s. There are also the All-Madden and All-Timer teams to choose from. To analyze your team's strengths, check the Madden Report, in which the "excitable one" offers his viewpoints on all facets of football. Another useful feature lets you diagram your own plays or modify the 162 plays included in the game.

Once you finish the pre-game activities by deciding various game conditions (even the weather), you're ready to take the field. The Strategic/Action Option lets you play *John Madden Football* as a strategy game or an arcade-style action game. You can pick the play and let the computer handle the action, or grab the joystick and make the play yourself. At any time during the game, you can call up screensful of exhaustive statistics.

Although the graphics are only adequate, *John Madden Football* allows you to control almost every variable of a football game. It overpowers its competitors as a supreme contest of strategy.

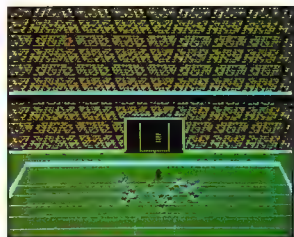
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John Madden Football is loaded with options: nine offensive formations, seven defensive formations, and lots of decisions.



Move the cursor on the Electronic Chalkboard to change running patterns and pass routes.



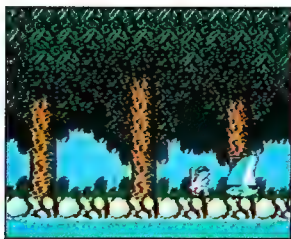
Nothing's automatic in this game, but this extra point clears the goalposts.



It's amazing what can happen on a nice, peaceful, evening walk. Depending on your luck, you could get bitten by a dog, or you could find a \$50 bill. Or, if you happen to be a small boy named Mark on his way home from a baseball game, you could meet a dragon who's searching for a hero to save his desperate planet. If you yearn for a classic (and funny) confrontation between good and evil on a strange new world, grab a baseball bat and take a swing at *Monster Party*.

A baseball bat? That's right. On the Dark World, your best weapon may be a well-rosined Louisville Slugger. Many of the creatures you meet will fire various energy blasts at you, but you can return them with a well-timed swing.

Of course, some creatures are a bit harder to defeat. Fortunately,



Imagine, for a moment, the theme from *Jaws* played on a piccolo.



MONSTER PARTY

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Bandai America, 12951 East 166th Street, Cerritos, CA 90701.



Just let these guys dance, Bert, or you'll be here forever.

on the Dark World, there are strange blue pills that will meld you with your dragon friend, Bert. As Bert, you can fly and shoot laser blasts from your fingertips.

Monster Party's sense of humor sets it apart from other quest games. Many of the creatures you face will make you smile, or even laugh out loud. For example, how can anyone keep a straight face while battling giant fried shrimp,

or man-eating sharks with huge fins and minuscule bodies? There's even a plant that will evoke memories of the voracious Audrey from the movie *Little Shop of Horrors*.

As you progress, you'll learn that certain creatures have bonus items, while others don't and are best avoided. Perhaps the key to playing *Monster Party* is to know when to be Mark, and when to be Bert. You'll also have to know where to find the blue pills when you want to be Bert. And you must decide the order in which to fight certain creatures (or whether to fight them at all). The password feature makes it easy to repeat a stage so you can figure out the best way to proceed.

Monster Party provides just enough thrills to keep things moving along from one outlandish creature to the next. Just keep laughing, and keep swinging that bat!

GP



Partly cloudy, with a 100 percent chance of stardust tonight. Don't let the sparklers touch you!

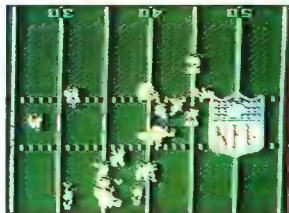
A N D P R E V I E W S

NFL FOOTBALL FOR NINTENDO

In LJN Toys' *NFL Football* for Nintendo, about the only things missing are the groans and the bruises. As the first videogame officially licensed by the National Football League, *NFL Football* allows you to control nearly all of the variables of a real football game, right down to the wind.

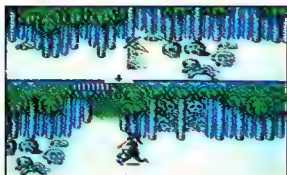
You can choose your teams from the ranks of the American or

the National Conferences, and all players are rated by skill level. Features include authentic formations for both defense and offense, and the option of calling audibles at the line of scrimmage. If you have what it takes to complete a winning season, you'll come away with the big prize — the Super Bowl trophy.



Coach your favorite NFL team to the Super Bowl.

MAD MAGAZINE'S FAVORITE SPIES RETURN TO NINTENDO



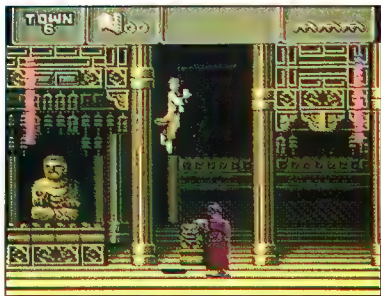
Spy Vs. Spy: The Island Caper is the sequel to the original *Spy Vs. Spy*.

If you're familiar with the antics of the *Spy Vs. Spy* comics by Sergio Aragones in *Mad* magazine, take a look at *Spy Vs. Spy: The Island Caper*, the latest Nintendo game from Kemco-Seika. Even more exciting and diabolical than the original *Spy Vs. Spy*, this sequel takes place on several tropi-

cal islands. You must find and assemble the parts of a powerful missile, while your opposite number tries his best to stop you. Sharks, quicksand, coconut bombs, and a suspiciously rumbling volcano are only a few of your worries. It's a race against time to build the missile and escape in your cozy submarine.

LISTEN CAREFULLY, GRASSHOPPER

In FCI's *Phantom Fighter* for Nintendo, you must battle terrible ghosts called Kyonishies in order to save eight Chinese villages. But these ghosts aren't going to vanish as a result of your power alone. You must train with the venerable Kung Fu Master, who will pass along his wisdom as well as his martial arts talents. The fighting skills will serve you well in your battles against human foes, but you'll need the wisdom to unravel the puzzles and quizzes placed between you and ultimate victory



The Kung Fu Master's teachings will be of great help.

A N D P R E V I E W S

STEALTH AND STRATEGY FROM ACTIVISION

Activision is releasing two titles for Nintendo this fall. In *Stealth ATF*, you pilot the latest fighter plane in the stealth arsenal. One player can go against the computer, or two players can battle each other. The smooth controls and 3-D graphics provide an exciting look into the aerial warfare of the next decade.



These sitting ducks are unaware of your presence in *Stealth ATF*.



Two armies of monsters prepare to square off in *Archon*.

Archon is a chesslike game about the titanic struggle between the forces of light and darkness. You can control either side, directing characters with unique powers who can fly, teleport, or battle it out in the Death Chamber. Your goal is to gain five power points and defeat the opposition.

THE ORBS ARE BACK!

They're back, and they're once again terrorizing a helpless population on Earth. When last we met the omnipresent Orbs, they were infesting New York. Now they've turned up on the West Coast in *Manhunter: San Francisco*, the latest computer game from Sierra On-Line. Once again, you are forced to work for the Orbs, hunting down your fellow humans. Appearances, however, are deceiving.

Anyone familiar with the earlier game, *Manhunter: New York*, will feel right at home with *Manhunter: San Francisco*. Unlike other Sierra games, all actions are selected with a cursor, rather than by typing keyboard commands. You can do anything from examining dead bodies for clues to playing the numerous arcade sequences scattered throughout the game.



Manhunter: San Francisco shows you the city as you've never seen it before.

Manhunter: San Francisco is being released for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers with color or monochrome graphics.



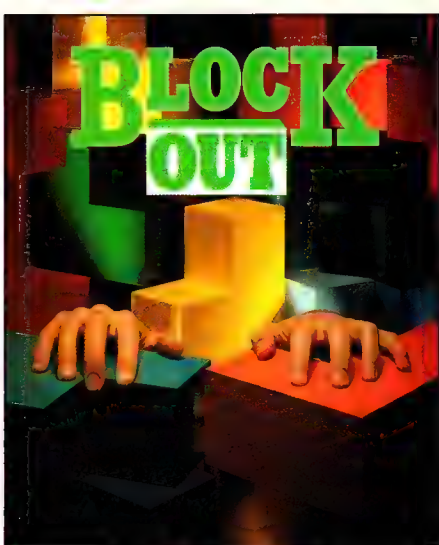
You can scan for suspects using this map of the city.

EMPEROR ZAE WANTS YOU!

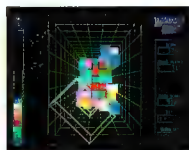
Star Fleet II: Krellan Commander is the sequel to Interstel's popular *Star Fleet I*. This time, you play on the Krellan side in the service of Emperor Zae. While pursuing ships from the United Grand Alliance, you'll progress from a lowly altern to the admiral of an entire Krellan battle fleet.

Star Fleet II is a very complex game that covers the whole process of getting a ship, gaining experience on survey missions, and eventually going into battle, either in space or on a number of planets. Success calls for a variety of gaming skills.

Star Fleet II is for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers with DOS 3.0 or higher (640K minimum memory recommended).



WATCH OUT FOR FALLING BLOCKS



Be Careful! You will be buried alive by the addictive 3-D challenge of BLOCKOUT™.

As the 3-D blocks appear, flip, rotate and maneuver them into position as they fall into the playing pit. Fit them together to complete layers, and you'll steadily clear your way out. But, make one false move, and you'll be buried in blocks.

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A N D P R E V I E W S

SPACE ROGUE AND OMEGA FROM ORIGIN

Origin Systems is releasing *Space Rogue*, expected to be one of the better space adventure games this year. Left to fend for yourself after pirates destroy your mother ship, you set out to find fame and fortune in the galaxy. You can hire out legally as a cargo hauler or illegally as a pirate, robbing all the

cargo haulers. There are numerous people to meet in spaceports and on planets throughout the Far Arm region.

In *Omega*, another new game from Origin, you play an elite cybertank engineer who is trying to design and test the ultimate battle tank. First design the hard-

ware, then program the artificial intelligence software that runs it. You can test your tank on battlefields you devise, and add improvements as needed.

Space Rogue and *Omega* are for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers; the Apple II; Macintosh; Amiga; Atari ST; and Commodore 64.

SHUFFLE-BOARD, BUT NO OCEAN CRUISE

So, just how good is your hand-eye coordination? If you want to give it a real workout, try *Shuffle Mania* from XOR. The only thing missing is the sea spray and the creak of deck chairs.

Shuffleboard is not the only game on the agenda, however. Once you tire of piling up the points in shuffleboard, there are eight other games waiting to test your skills — including simulations of bowling and curling.

You can play *Shuffle Mania* with a friend, against the computer, or practice by yourself. It's for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers with CGA, EGA, or VGA graphics.

IN SEARCH OF THE DESERT FOX

It's hard to imagine how any commander could have done better than Erwin Rommel in North Africa during World War II. Although his German Afrika Korps was badly outnumbered and poorly supplied, he still managed to bedevil the Allies for two years. In

Rommel: Battles for North Africa from SSG, you can play the part of Rommel (which may be an exercise in futility) or the Allied commander, Bernard Montgomery.

SSG's Warplan and Warpaint modules allow you to construct your own battles and battlefields,

or modify the historical scenarios in a number of ways.

Rommel: Battles for North Africa, already an award-winning game for Commodore computers, is now available for IBM, Tandy, and compatibles with 512K minimum memory, and VGA, MCGA, EGA, or CGA graphics.

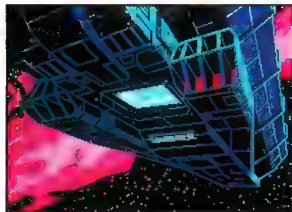
SPACE QUEST III, NOW FOR THE AMIGA

At the end of *Space Quest II*, we left our reluctant hero, Roger Wilco, after he had just settled down in his spaceship for some much-needed suspended animation. But now his ship has been scooped up by a strange salvage vessel, and Roger must find a way off. After he escapes, he gets caught up in yet another convoluted adventure. The plot of Sierra On-Line's *Space Quest III* revolves around Roger trying to rescue the Two Guys from Andromeda, game designers to the stars.

Previously released for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers, *Space Quest III* has been upgraded to make the most of the Amiga's graphics and sound capabilities. An animated sequence at the beginning of the game fills in the background of the story and launches the adventure.



The Amiga version of *Space Quest III* has great graphics and sound.



Our hero, Roger Wilco, seems to attract trouble in *Space Quest III*.



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But hey, first you'll need a car. Choose one of the 25 classics from a '32 Ford Coupe

to a '63 Vette, and soup it up into a fire breathing Street Rod with some of the 35 custom parts.

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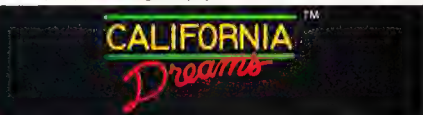
City State

Zip Phone

What is the driver of the '55 Chevy called?

Sales Person's Name Store Name

For the answer to the contest question and complete contest details, contact a participating dealer. © 1989 Logical Design Works, Inc., 780 Montague Expwy, #403, San Jose, CA 95131



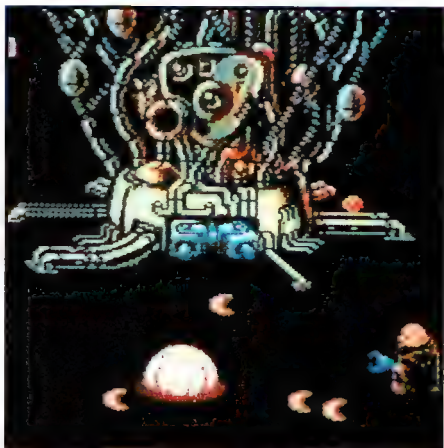
A N D P R E V I E W S

FESTER'S QUEST FOR NINTENDO

You probably wouldn't be surprised if invading aliens abducted a certain city's entire population but conveniently overlooked the Addams family. It seems everyone tries to give the Addams mansion a wide berth — which just may be your ace in the hole.

Sunsoft's *Fester's Quest* is a new Nintendo game based on the classic TV show *The Addams Family* from the 1960s. In *Fester's Quest*, Uncle Fester and the rest of the spooky family (minus Gomez, who's looking after things at home) set out to defeat the alien invaders.

Fester must assemble a map revealing the whereabouts of the Master Alien Boss. Each time he kills an alien boss, he gets a piece of the map. To help Fester in his quest, the other family members have hidden supplies in several houses around town. Lurch, the towering butler, even shows up to do away with a few aliens. When Uncle Fester gets all five pieces of the map, he still must confront the Master Alien Boss in a final titanic struggle.



The Addams family is in a race against time in *Fester's Quest*.

THE PLAYROOM FOR PCs

Broderbund's *The Playroom* is a unique melding of educational and entertainment software for youngsters. Unlike some other educational software, *The Playroom* is not a dry, lifeless drill program.

Everything starts inside a simulated playroom, where children (and probably more than a few adults) can use a mouse, joystick, or keyboard to move a cursor to various objects. Each object represents a game, which is also controlled with the cursor. Children can play spelling, math, vocabulary, time-telling, and creativity games, accompanied by a charming companion, Pepper Mouse. There's even a bulletin board which speaks in a digitized voice to teach survival skills, such as knowing the word for poison or the safe way to cross a street. There's also a printer option.

The Playroom is available for all IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers. It works with VGA, MCGA, EGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics, and requires at least 512K memory and DOS 2.1 or higher. The package includes both 5.25- and 3.5-inch disks.



Charm and humor aid learning in *The Playroom*.

AND PREVIEWS

8 EYES FOR NINTENDO

In *8 Eyes*, a new Nintendo game from Taxan, you play Orin the Falconer in a future world deci-

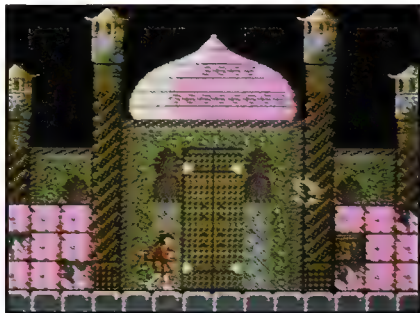
mated by nuclear war. The Great King has used the 8 Eyes, fantastic jewels formed from nuclear explosions, to rebuild civilization. But his eight Dukes have stolen the Eyes, and they've banished the King to the wastelands.

Now it's up to you and your

fighting falcon, Cultrus, to retrieve the 8 Eyes. First you must battle the Dukes' soldiers and horrifying mutant creatures. Then you must journey to the Altar of Peace to replace the jewels and await the return of the Great King.



Your quest in *8 Eyes* will take you around the world.

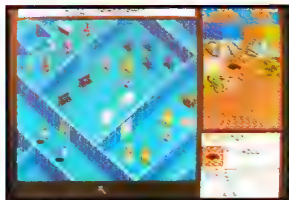


8 Eyes has beautiful graphics and background screens.

BREACH 2 FOR PC, ST, AMIGA

Omnitrend Software is releasing *Breach 2*, a sequel to the popular role-playing war game, *Breach*. The new version has better graphics, more animated combat, digitized sound effects, and an original musical score.

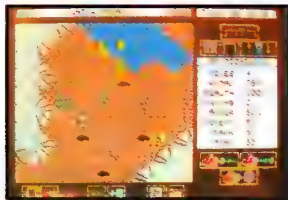
The focus of *Breach 2* is on confrontation and combat. You start by creating your own character, then try to advance through the ranks. Blocking your path are ten unique opponents who have access to all of the same weapons and equipment that you do. The action takes place against a variety



As seen in this Amiga screen, *Breach 2* offers both overhead and map views of the action.

of multicolored backgrounds, including missions in space and encounters on alien worlds.

Other features include adjustable skill levels; the ability to link scenarios together to form campaigns; optional scenario disks; and an editor that lets you create your own scenarios or modify existing ones.



The status window in *Breach 2* (right) allows you to monitor your character's health, strength, and other attributes.

Breach 2 is being released for the Amiga, Atari ST, and IBM PC-compatible computers. The PC version works with CGA, EGA, VGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics; the AdLib or Creative Music Systems sound boards; and a Microsoft-compatible mouse.

GP

This list of 100 top video and computer games is updated each month. The ☆ symbol indicates recently reviewed games added to the list in this issue.

KEY TO VERSIONS: **PC** (IBM PC/XT/AT, PS/2, Tandy, and compatibles); **AT** (IBM AT and compatibles only); **64** (Commodore 64/128); **Amiga** (Commodore Amiga); **Mac** (Apple Macintosh); **Apple II** (Apple II//+//c//e); **IIGS** (Apple IIGS); **ST** (Atari ST); **NES** (Nintendo Entertainment System); **Game Boy** (Nintendo Game Boy); **Sega** (Sega Master System); **Genesis** (Sega Genesis); **NEC** (NEC TurboGrafx-16); **7800** (Atari 7800); **2600** (Atari VCS 2600); **XE** (Atari XE video-game system and 8-bit computers). *The first version listed in each entry was the version reviewed.*

☆ **Adventures of Bayou Billy** combines martial arts action, fast driving, and shooting. As Billy, you start your adventure down in the bayous of Louisiana. Your girlfriend Annabelle has been kidnapped by Gordon, the Gangster King of Bourbon Street, and now it's pay back time. This game keeps you busy, but humorous touches keep you laughing as well. Konami, for NES.

Adventures of Lolo is a puzzling game that rewards logic and patience. Princess Lala has been kidnapped, and it's up to Prince Lolo to save her. He can do this by clearing a seemingly endless number of rooms in the Great Devil's castle. It's an enjoyable mind-bender for both adults and children. Hal America, for NES.

Air Fortress isn't revolutionary, but it is one of the most playable zap-the-alien games available for Nintendo. Your mission is to shoot your way through a series of alien space forts invading your planet. Each fort is a maze of corridors and elevators

guarded by hostile aliens and robots, and you must locate the main reactor and destroy it before escaping. The graphics are genuinely imaginative, and the game is neither too easy nor too hard. Hal America, for NES.

Altered Beast is an action game that makes you the monster. Summoned from the grave by Zeus to rescue his daughter Athena, you're a mighty warrior who can transform into various kinds of fearsome beasts. *Altered Beast* comes with every Sega Genesis and is far superior to the earlier version for the Sega Master System. It rivals the arcade version with outstanding graphics, numerous screens, fast action, and stereo sound. Sega, for Genesis, Sega.

The Ancient Art of War at Sea realistically simulates the tactics of the age of sail. It lets you wage campaigns against Nelson, Blackbeard, John Paul Jones, and other great captains, or make up your own customized scenarios and maps. A different sort of war game, rather charming. The PC version has newly updated EGA graphics. Broderbund, for PC, Apple II, IIGS, Mac.

Archipelagos is an unusual

puzzle game from the U.K. Your goal is to conquer randomly shaped landmasses by absorbing stones and destroying obelisks. Sometimes you must build land bridges to connect isolated islands, and typical obstacles include deadly trees, a creature who turns land into sand, and eggs that release poisoned blood. A fascinating and addictive game of strategy and action. Logotron/Britannica, for PC, Amiga, ST.

Baal upholds the Psynosis reputation for graphically outstanding action games with fast and smooth animation. As the captain of the Time Warriors, an elite commando squad, you must retrieve the apocalyptic War Machine from the evil Baal. This involves running, jumping, somersaulting, climbing ladders, leaping over bombs and mines, and (of course) shooting enemies. Psynosis, for 64, PC, Amiga, ST.

Bad Dudes is an uncomplicated kill-anything-that-moves game, with a nominal plot that involves rescuing a kidnapped president. The Nintendo version is a worthy adaptation of the arcade hit, but lacks a simultaneous two-player option. Overall, a simple and satisfying action game. Data East, for NES, PC,

64, Amiga, ST, Apple II.

Batman, The Caped Crusader has much in common with the summer's hit movie — it looks fantastic and is fun at first, but eventually falls just short of greatness. The problem is that *Batman* is a cross between a martial-arts arcade game and a computer puzzle, and the sheer number of enemies you must defeat can become overwhelming. The player interface is well-designed, however, and the graphics create a good comic-book "feel." Data East, for 64, Amiga, ST, Apple II.

Battles of Napoleon is an intense strategy game that lets you relive the bloody campaigns of the Napoleonic Wars. Like traditional board-based war games, it has a hexagonal grid map, individual unit markers, complex rules, and lots of minutiae. The learning curve is steep, but the reward is historically accurate and fascinating game play.SSI/Electronic Arts, for 64, Apple II.

Bionic Commando drops you behind enemy lines to rescue Super-Joe, an ace combat soldier. Using a map of 19 areas, players must save Joe and thwart an evil plan to take over the world. Fast action, great graphics, and variety — this game has it all. Capcom, for NES.

Blades of Steel is an ice hockey game that sizzles! Choose an NHL franchise and make a run for the Stanley Cup. If you push too hard, a brawl will ensue. Its playability and good graphics make this game a crowd favorite. Konami, for NES.

Blaster Master takes you through eight levels of narrow passageways as you try to find and destroy the Plutonium Boss. In your armored vehicle, you struggle against many kinds of radioactive mutants. Most of them can be killed with your car's weapons systems, but to conquer some you must leave the car and fight on foot. Sunsoft, for NES.

☆ **Blockout** is basically a 3-D spin-off of *Tetris*. Instead of



good graphics and plenty of challenges. Konami, for NES.

Chessmaster 2100 is an impressive, feature-laden sequel to the excellent computer chess program, *Chessmaster 2000*. The chess-playing logic has been improved, and the stunning screen graphics, sound effects, and depth of play should impress novices and experts alike. The Software Toolworks, for PC, Apple II, IIGS, 64, Mac, and Amiga.

Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer 2.0 emphasizes flight training, not combat or real-world scenery. The program, manual, and audio cassette (with Yeager's voice) help you through take-offs, aerobatics, and landings. You can pick from 18 different aircraft (biplanes to space shuttles), compete in air races, and fly with the Thunderbirds and Blue Angels. An excellent way to earn your electronic wings. Electronic Arts, for PC.

Cosmic Osmo is the delightful sequel to *The Manhole*, a unique cartoonlike game of unstructured exploration. You don't have to kill any enemies, pursue any quests, or destroy any planets. Instead, you freely move about a topsy-turvy universe of odd places and objects, interacting with the graphically detailed environment in almost any way imaginable. It's so nonviolent that your spaceship shoots Q-Tips. Activision, for Mac.

★ **Curse of the Azure Bonds**, the sequel to *Pool of Radiance*, is an Advanced D&D adventure. It's a solid fantasy role-playing game that's definitely not for wimps. You begin with level 5 characters, and you have several new categories of monsters to overcome. In fact, combat is the heart and soul of this game. Be prepared to spend many hours fighting enemies and exploring. Recommended for experienced adventurers.SSI, for 64, PC, Apple II.

Cyborg Hunter brings to the Sega system a first-rate action maze game in which you guide a bounty hunter

against the evil warlord Vipron and his equally evil cyborg minions. The graphics are excellent, the game play exciting, and the action nonstop. Activision, for Sega.

★ **Decisive Battles of the American Civil War** (Volume 2) is a well-designed strategic war game in the board game tradition. It covers the middle period of the war with such battles as Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Gaines Mills, Stones River, and Chattanooga. What makes it unique, however, is its outstanding graphics — it is the first really playable hexagonal grid war game for a personal computer. SSG, for PC, 64, Apple II, Mac.

Defender of the Crown is a graphically rich action and strategy game based on civil war in historical England. You have been chosen to lead a group of gallant Saxon knights against the Normans. The ultimate goal is the crown of England. Win, and you gain land, fortune, and your fair maiden. Amiga and PC EGA users, especially, will enjoy the many visual effects. Cinemaware, for Amiga, NES, Apple IIGS, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

★ **Desert Commander** is the most realistic war game yet seen for Nintendo. Based on the North African campaigns of World War II, it simulates air and ground warfare with emphasis on strategy, not arcade action. Despite a few flaws — limited maneuverability, mysterious casualty statistics, and occasional tolerance of absurd tactics — it's an entertaining and welcome gesture toward more sophisticated war games. Kemco-Selka, for NES.

★ **Destroyer Escort** puts you in command of a World War II warship, and your mission is to escort supply and troop ships through hostile waters. Neither an all-out shoot-em-up nor an ultra-realistic simulation, it combines elements of both genres to create an easy-to-play, entertaining military game. MicroPlay/MicroProse, for 64.

Double Dragon is one of the finest games available for those who like their action

fast and their enemies relentless. Billy grew up as a streetwise martial arts expert. His girlfriend is abducted by the toughest gang in the city. You'll need all 11 methods of attack, plus the odd weapon, to rescue her. Tradewest, for NES; Arcadia, for Amiga, PC; Activision, for Atari 2600, 7800, Sega.

Dr. Chaos is a two-phase game that first requires you to explore a maze-like mansion in search of a missing invention. After finding it, you must fight your way back through the mansion to assemble pieces of a laser weapon. The first phase demands careful mapping; the second resembles a standard Nintendo shoot-em-up. If you like large, intricate puzzles, you'll find *Dr. Chaos* a most elaborate and clever game. FCI, for NES.

DuckTales delightfully captures the spirit of Walt Disney cartoons. You guide Scrooge McDuck (with cameo appearances by other Disney characters) throughout the world on a quest for five legendary lost treasures. The amusing graphics are vintage Disney; there's no gruesome violence, and the skill level is challenging without being too difficult. Perfect for Disney fans of all ages. Capcom, for NES.

★ **Echelon** is billed as a 3-D space flight simulator, and it's a darn good one. But it's also a thoroughly engrossing adventure game in which you discover clues to a pirate base while making an archaeological survey of a planet. Thoughtful features, great graphics, and startling sound effects (for PCs) make this game a winner. Access, for PC.

Empire is an award-winning game of global conquest in which you command armies, fleets, and aerial armadas against a very tough computer opponent. Easy to play, yet ever challenging, it's quite addictive and has earned a deserved reputation as a classic. Interstel, for PC, Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, 64, ST.

F-19 Stealth Fighter is an ex-

positioning two-dimensional shapes at the bottom of a flat screen, you have to steer three-dimensional blocks into the bottom of a walled pit. Since each wire-frame block can be rotated around three different axes and maneuvered in four lateral directions, *Blockout* is a real brain-twister that adds a whole new dimension to an old favorite. California Dreams, for PC, Mac, Amiga.

Blood Money for the Amiga may well be the best shoot-em-up computer game ever written. The lengthy introduction — with its stunning asteroid sequence and digitized stereo soundtrack — is not to be missed. Fortunately, the rest of the game lives up to these theatrics. The graphics are extremely detailed, the animation is sometimes startling (watch for the jellyfish in the undersea world), and the difficulty level is arcade-class. There's even a simultaneous two-player option. Psygnosis, for Amiga, ST, 64.

Capone is a simple shooting game in which you're the cop and the targets include every gangster in Chicago. They blaze away at you from sidewalks, alleys, windows, and warehouses, and you have to shoot them before they shoot you. Excellent graphics, though a fast PC is recommended for smooth animation. A light gun or mouse also helps. The lack of a continue feature may frustrate some players. Actionware, for PC.

Castlevania II: Simon's Quest returns you to a Nintendo version of Transylvania in search of Dracula's scattered (and well-guarded) remains. Guide your whip-wielding hero through lakes of fire, dank stone villages, and vast haunted mansions. A big, elaborate quest game with

ceptionally high-quality simulation of air combat in the Air Force's top secret plane. You fly from carriers or land bases on combat and reconnaissance missions in Libya, the Persian Gulf, the North Cape, and Central Europe. You control virtually everything in this detail-rich, high-tech craft. MicroProse, for PC.

Fighting Street is the first title released on compact disc for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 and special TurboGrafx-CD player. It's a martial-arts action game similar to such Nintendo hits as *Double Dragon* and *Ninja Gaiden*, but with obviously superior graphics and sound. Except for its stereo soundtrack, however, it doesn't seem to make the most of the CD's vast potential. It may take awhile for game designers to catch up with this advanced technology. Capcom, for NEC.

Gauntlet is one of the few role-playing games for Nintendo. As one of four adventurers you'll trek through 100 rooms, battling enemies and looking for treasure. A game equally fun for one player or two players in cooperation or competition. Helpful password feature. Tengen, for NES; Mindscape, for Amiga, Apple II, IGS, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

Genghis Khan may well be the finest historical role-playing game on the market. Great fun to play, it also teaches some profound lessons about the realities of power. Become one of four 13th-century monarchs and try to rule the world. You get all the power, but also all the problems. Startlingly beautiful graphics. Koel, for PC, NES.

☆ **Goal!** is a soccer game that lets you compete for the World Cup — against either the computer or a friend. Each on-screen player is ranked according to various soccer skills, and other realistic touches include fallible referees, cheering crowds, and halftime entertainment. The screen can be a bit confusing (only part of the field appears at one time), but overall this is quite an enjoyable sports simulation. Jaleco, for NES.



Hidden Agenda is an intriguing strategy game that makes you the new president of Chimerica, a fictional Latin American country whose old government was recently overthrown. Your position is insecure, yet you must balance many conflicting forces and pressures while rebuilding the economy and trying to keep the peace. Revealing, educational, and fun. Springboard, for PC, Mac.

Hostage jumps right off the front page of today's newspapers. Terrorists have attacked an embassy and captured hostages. You lead a six-man commando squad to rescue the hostages and kill the terrorists. A training mission helps acquaint new players with the game. It's a realistic depiction of a familiar contemporary nightmare. Mindscape, for PC, Amiga, ST. Retitled *Rescue: The Embassy Mission* for NES, from Kemco-Seika.

☆ **Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade** is a faithful adaptation of last summer's hit movie, re-creating many scenes and even some dialogue. Although Indy's quest for the Holy Grail parallels the movie plot, it also diverges in some interesting ways. An entertaining adventure with attractive graphics. Lucasfilm, for PC, Amiga, ST.

IronSword: Wizards & Warriors II is a superior sequel that picks up where the original story left off. The sinister sorcerer Malkil has returned and is spreading evil from atop IceFire Mountain. As the brave knight Kuros of Elrond, you must fight your way to the mountain and defeat Malkil. The graphics are dazzling, and the diverse challenges are the game's strong point. Acclaim, for NES.

Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf isn't a flashy or spectacular game, but it is a consistent and professional simulation of pro golf. One to four people can play on three different courses, including a fantasy course of Nicklaus' 18 favorite holes. You can even challenge nine different computer opponents, including Jack himself. Accolade, for Amiga, PC, 64, IGS, Konami, for NES.

Jigsaw! is actually a puzzle program, not a game. Graphics screens are scrambled into 8, 15, 40, or 60 pieces for you to reassemble. The smaller puzzles are great for kids, and the larger ones are harder than they seem — unlike cardboard jigsaws, all pieces are the same size and shape. You can load your own graphics screens, too. Clever, nonviolent family entertainment. Britannica Software, for PC, Amiga, IGS, Mac.

John Elway's Quarterback has been a popular football game in the arcades, and the new home versions generally offer flexibility of play with a wide range of strategies. Tradewest for NES; Melbourne House, for PC, Apple II, IGS, 64.

Jordan Versus Bird: One On One is the sequel to one of the most popular athletic simulations of all time: *Larry Bird and Dr. J Go One-On-One*, which has sold over 400,000 copies. The new game offers everything the earlier program had, plus some extras. There are three games here: Bird vs. Jordan; an Air Jordan slam dunk contest; and a three-point shootout. Electronic Arts, for PC, 64.

☆ **Journey** is a radical but logical departure from Infocom's traditional text-only adventure games. Thanks to attractive graphics and a menu-based user interface, it's much less complex and easier to play. It also boasts some of the best interactive fiction writing ever. Though some will appreciate its slower frustration level, traditionalists may miss the mind-racking puzzles and lengthy playing

time. Infocom/Mediasgenic, for PC, Mac, Amiga, Apple II.

☆ **Keith Courage in Alpha Zones** is the first game released for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 (it's included with every system). As Keith Courage, your mission is to save the world from alien invaders by penetrating their seven-zone world beneath the Earth's surface. The game is similar to such Nintendo titles as *Strider* and *Bionic Commando*, but with noticeably better graphics. It also gives us a peek at the promising potential of this powerful game system. NEC, for NEC.

King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella is a remarkable addition to the *King's Quest* series. The story has King Graham's daughter on a quest for her own to save the king's life. Wonderful graphics combine with fairy tale and mythological allusions to provide dozens of hours of game play. Sierra On-Line, for PC, Apple II, IGS, Mac, ST.

Kings of the Beach: Professional Beach Volleyball is the volleyball equivalent of *Jordan Vs. Bird: One on One* in style, design, and overall excellence. Try to master the six-pack slammer, the dig, and the Kong block as you play on beach courts around the world. Electronic Arts, for PC, Konami, for NES.

Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf is a thorough and challenging simulation. The control pad becomes a sensitive substitute for a club as you work your way through sand, wind, and the other hazards of 18 holes. Choose your golfer from a menu of four very different players: SNK, for NES.

The Magic Candle is a traditional fantasy role-playing game that breaks no new ground, but nevertheless is a beautiful addition to the genre. You lead a band of adventurers in search of a magic spell that will contain the evil demon Dreaq, who was imprisoned ages ago and is now escaping. There's lots of exploring, a reasonable amount of combat, and a command structure that is both logical and flexible. Mindcraft, for PC, 64, Apple II.

Mappyland is an upbeat, innocuous adventure that avoids the mass extermination and high-tech destruction found in many Nintendo games. The central character is a mouse named Mappy, who is pursued by kittens as he tries to collect cheese, Christmas trees, and other items for his fiancée, Mapico. *Mappyland's* playful action, bright graphics, and likeable characters should appeal to gamers of all ages. Taxan USA, for NES.

Mega Man II is a sequel that surpasses the original. As Mega Man, you must defeat a mad scientist's eight powerful androids to thwart his diabolical plot to rule the world. The all-new androids are challenging opponents, and the game's other characters are cartoonlike creatures with destructive tendencies. Even the graphics are better this time around. Capcom, for NES.

Metroid is a very popular Nintendo game in which you guide space hunter Samus through the maze-world of the planet Zebes. Excellent, fast-paced game play. Nintendo of America, for NES.

Microsoft Flight Simulator is the "game" that first made entertainment software a best-seller on IBM-compatible computers. It's really more of a true simulation than a game, since you don't score points, fight enemies, or embark on a quest. Just sit back in your Cessna and fly. PC version 3.0 offers improved graphics, especially with EGA or VGA. Microsoft, for PC, Mac; SubLogic, for ST, Amiga, 64, Apple II, XE.

☆ **Might and Magic II** is a near-perfect example of its genre: A fantasy role-playing game with strong graphics, a well-designed user interface, lengthy playing time, and numerous options. The automatic mapping is greatly appreciated, and the well-organized screen displays just about everything you need to know to play the game. New World Computing, for PC, 64, Apple II, Mac, Amiga.

Mike Tyson's Punch-Out is one of the most popular Nintendo

games ever sold. You battle your way up the ranks of boxing contenders until you get a chance to fight the champ himself. As Little Mac, you can throw jabs, uppercuts, and body shots. Nintendo of America, for NES.

Montezuma's Revenge features Panama Joe, an intrepid explorer, searching for treasure in Central America. The action begins when he stumbles into the ancient tomb of Montezuma, an engrossing maze of corridors, chambers, and horrors. Parker Brothers, for Sega.

NFL Challenge emphasizes field strategy, not arcade action. When the ball is snapped, the players are represented by chalkboard-style X's and O's — simple graphics which may disappoint some gamers. But the real strength of this game is what happens *before* the ball is snapped. It takes you beneath the rough-and-tumble surface of pro football to reveal the nuances and subtleties of coaching and play-calling. XOR, for PC, Mac.

Ninja Gaiden promises to become one of the most popular Nintendo games of 1989. Ninja Gaiden is a member of a highly trained secret police force. He can confront any evil with only his sword and Shuriken to protect him. During six rounds he meets numerous enemy attacks in 20 areas of play. Fast and furious action. Tecmo, for NES.

Nobunaga's Ambition is an impressive historical simulation. It places you in 16th-century Japan as a powerful *daimyo* (lord) attempting to unify warring fiefdoms. More than a war game, it forces you to deal with diplomacy, economics, and other factors. It has also survived the transition from PC to Nintendo particularly well. Koel, for PC, NES.

The Omnicron Conspiracy is essentially a role-playing detective game with a sci-fi twist. Your mission is to find a missing secret agent, but along the way you stumble upon a conspiracy involving



Stardust, a new drug. Strong points include humor, good graphics, a clever first-person user interface, plenty of opportunity for exploration, and a cyberpunk atmosphere. Epyx, for PC.

P.O.W. is a straightforward shoot-out from the makers of *Guerrilla War*. Deep inside enemy territory, you must fight your way to the would-be perpetrators of a global economic collapse. The limited range of combat moves makes the game easy to play for novices, yet it's still challenging enough for video veterans. You'd better bring a rapid-fire controller, though. SNK, for NES.

Populous, to put it bluntly, lets you play God. As either a good or bad deity, you control the development of your chosen people on the world below. By flattening out the mountainous terrain, you make their farms more productive, and thereby increase their population. The ultimate goal is to conquer the other god's chosen ones. An excellent and highly original strategy game for one or two players. Electronic Arts, for Amiga, ST.

Presumed Guilty! requires you to unravel an intricate international plot of mystery and intrigue — before you get framed for a crime you didn't commit. If you like spy novels and mysteries, this spine-tingler will keep you on the edge of your seat. Cosmi, for PC, 64.

Qix is an interesting revival of an arcade hit from the early 1980s. By manipulating a drawing tool, you must carve off sections of the screen while avoiding fatal collisions with the Qix, a weird thing that resembles a flock of flying

knitting needles. Recommended for those who missed it the first time around. Taito, for 64, PC, Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, and ST.

Rastan, adapted from the Sega arcade game, puts you in the combat boots of a successful mercenary who's trying to rescue a king's kidnapped daughter. The colorful action takes you through jungles, castles, and enemy headquarters. The graphics are good and keep getting better, but be prepared for a difficult game. Sega, for Sega.

☆ **Red Lightning** is an incredibly detailed World War II simulation that pits NATO armies against the forces of the Warsaw Pact. It encompasses virtually every aspect of modern warfare and has great graphics, but sometimes tends to bog down the player with *too much* detail. Recommended for serious war gamers who appreciate complexity. SSI, for PC, Amiga, ST.

Red Storm Rising, based on Tom Clancy's bestselling novel, is a highly realistic yet quite playable simulation of naval warfare as waged by modern nuclear submarines. You can pick from a variety of U.S. subs and weapons before embarking on several different missions against Warsaw Pact forces. Rich in detail and options, the game takes awhile to learn, but soon immerses you in the action of World War III. Microprose, for PC and 64.

Rocket Ranger makes you the hero of a 1940s science fiction serial. The Nazis will win World War II unless you can rescue a scientist. But don't worry! You've been sent a jet pack from the future. Terrific graphics, great game. Cinemaware, for PC, Amiga, 64, ST, IIGS; Kemco-Selka, for NES.

Romance of the Three Kingdoms offers you the modestly challenging job of unifying medieval China. It's no Sunday stroll. Start as a provincial warlord and end up as emperor. A classy, sophisticated game that conveys a rich sense of historical texture and teaches fascinating lessons

about the realities of political power. Koel, for PC.

Search for the Titanic is a unique simulation that casts you in the role of an oceanographer — an unlikely subject for a computer game. It would seem, but highly original. Your goal is to finance and organize an expedition to find the famous S.S. *Titanic*, sunk by an iceberg in 1912. You'll learn a lot about deep-sea exploration and have fun along the way. This game isn't for everyone, but it gets high marks for playability and authenticity. Capstone (Intra-Corp), for PC, 64, Apple II.

Shadowgate is an excellent graphics adventure, with a fascinating interactive environment and ingenious puzzles to unravel. Very challenging and well designed. Mindscape, for PC, Amiga, Apple II, Mac, 64, ST; Kemco-Seika, for NES.

Shanghai allows you to play the ancient game of Mah-Jongg without having to round up other people, although you can play with one or more friends if you want. It's simple to match the stacked tiles and remove them from the board, but winning is not that easy. Engaging, strategic, and habit-forming. Activision, for PC, Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, 64, ST, Sega.

Slipheed is the Americanized version of the sequel to *Thexder*, which was a hit both here and in its native Japan. Unpretentious and refreshing, *Slipheed* is an unabashed space shoot-em-up with great graphics. You're in control of a futuristic fighter that's a cross between an F-14 and the *Millennium Falcon*, and there are plenty of aliens to zap. The IBM version is notable as one of the few really good shoot-em-ups available for PCs. Sierra On-Line, for PC, Amiga, ST, Mac, IIGS.

SimCity is an outstanding and original strategy game in which you manage the development of a simulated city. As "years" pass, you must deal with such problems as taxes, zoning, crime, housing,

transportation, city services, commercial development, and growing population. Setbacks include natural disasters, nuclear accidents, and even monster attacks. A true standout. Maxis, for PC, Amiga, 64, Mac.

Skate or Die brings home the excitement of "cement surfing." There are radical moves and raunchy settings galore, including a distinctly *punk* atmosphere. Graphics are good for NES, extra-nice in the PC EGA version. Ultra, for NES; Electronic Arts, for PC, IIGS, 64.

Space Quest III: The Pirates of Pestulon reunites you with space custodian Roger Wilco. Roger's mission is to rescue the Two Guys from Andromeda, a pair of game designers *extraordinaire*, who have been kidnapped by Elmo and his fellow pirates. Great fun, outstanding graphics — everything you've come to expect from a Sierra game. Sierra On-Line, for PC, Amiga, Mac, IIGS.

StarGoose is an arcade-style space shoot-em-up that sends you on a mission to a hostile planet. Zooming over the heavily defended surface in your fighter ship, you have to blast the alien installations before they blast you. Good action, but strictly for fans of kill-or-be-killed games. Logotron/Spinnaker, for PC, 64, Amiga, ST.

Steel Thunder is a tank combat simulator that doesn't allow the complexity of simulation to obscure the fun. You can choose from four different tanks and armored vehicles, and participate in 24 realistic combat scenarios. The graphics are highly detailed — no wire-frame polygons here. It's the next best thing to starring in your own private war movie. Accolade, for PC, 64.

☆ **Storm Across Europe** is a vast strategy game that covers the entire European theater during World War II. You can start in the fall of 1939, the spring of 1940, or the summers of 1941-44. One to three people can play, with the restriction that the Ger-

man forces must be controlled by a human player. It's realistic, easy to play, extremely educational, and a true mental challenge. SSI, for 64, PC, Amiga.

☆ **Strider** combines action with a scavenger hunt. As Hiryu, the youngest and best member of a commando group known as the Striders, you must rescue your best friend Kain, who has been kidnapped and brainwashed. To locate the enemy base, you must find five keys and six information disks hidden throughout the world. *Strider* is exciting, enjoyable, and original. Capcom, for NES.

Super Mario Bros. 2 is a super sequel to the earlier *Mario Bros.* adventures. Various playing the roles of Mario, Luigi, Princess Toadstool, or Toad, you embark on a quest to free the land of Subcon from an evil spell. Great graphics, whimsical characters, and amusing animation deservedly make this game a hit. Nintendo, for NES.

Tecmo Bowl offers a rowdy, colorful, action-packed football simulation for Nintendo. Teams in the game mirror strengths and weaknesses of real-life NFL teams, giving ample scope for coaching strategy. Definitely for adults as well as kids. Tecmo, for NES.

☆ **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** is based on the popular comic book characters and TV show. You control four genetically altered turtles who live on pizza, are martial arts experts, and have their own unique skills. When their human friend April is kidnapped, you must guide the turtles to her rescue. Unlike most spin-offs of TV shows and movies, this is a first-class (though difficult) game. Ultra, for NES, PC, 64, Amiga.

Tetris, a game developed in the Soviet Union, is extremely habit-forming. Place the seven shapes of falling blocks into horizontal rows. When you finish one row, it falls from the screen and the next blocks start falling faster. Simple to learn, but always



challenging. Equally good in all formats. Spectrum Holobyte, for PC, Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, 64, ST; Nintendo, for NES. Game Boy; Tengen, for NES.

The Three Stooges are more than willing to assist Ma as Mr. Fleecem, a no-good banker, attempts to evict her (and Mary, Leona, and Cynthia, her three beautiful daughters). To raise funds, the Stooges take a variety of odd jobs, similar to some of their finest shows, such as *Hoi Polloi* and *Punch Drunks*. Lotsa nyucks. Cinemaware, for PC, Apple II, 64; Activision, for NES.

Thundercade has so-so graphics and isn't particularly original — you're a hero who must singlehandedly save the world from doom — but it makes up for this with exciting game play. As the driver of a special combat motorcycle, you infiltrate enemy territory in an effort to thwart a gang of atomic terrorists. The action is swift, and *Thundercade* stands out as one of the few Nintendo games with a simultaneous two-player option. American Sammy, for NES.

Time Soldiers, adapted from the arcade hit, is a challenging, complex game in which you fight enemies in the past, present, and future. This game exercises your brain as well as your reflexes. A friend can play along with you in a cooperative mode. Sega, for Sega.

Track and Field II recalls last fall's Olympic fever. Play 15 games of skill, stamina, and savvy. Challenge an opponent or the computer in pole vaulting, archery, gymnastics, fencing, swimming, and many other exciting contests. Choose any sport you want,

do well, and listen to the cheering crowds. Konami, for NES.

Ultima V is the latest in a deservedly popular series of fantasy role-playing games. Its alternate-universe, Tolkienian world is much better thought-out and internally consistent than is usual in this crowded genre. Charming tapestry-like graphics and smooth playability make this a winner. Origin Systems, for PC.

Universal Military Simulator offers armchair generals the chance to re-fight actual battles as you think they should have been fought. You can also design your own maps and armies to stage battles in the past or the future. Additional scenario disks are released from time to time, making this a powerful program indeed. Rainbird, for PC, Amiga, Mac, 64, ST.

Wayne Gretzky Hockey is one of the most realistic sports simulations ever designed for personal computers. It successfully captures the fast-paced feel of NHL hockey as you control either the 1972

Montreal Canadiens or the Boston Bruins. A game as good as its namesake. Bethesda Softworks, for Amiga, PC, 64, Mac, ST.

Where in Europe Is Carmen Sandiego? is a learning tool that actually provides hours of fun as well. You'll be surprised at how much geography you'll learn and how much fun you'll have while scouring Europe for a band of art thieves. Broderbund, for PC, Apple II, iIGS, 64.

Wizardry V: Heart of the Maelstrom is the latest entry in the acclaimed *Wizardry* fantasy role-playing adventure series. Beginners and experienced players alike will find plenty to enjoy in this game. Sir-Tech, for PC, Apple II, 64.

Wizards and Warriors takes place in the deadly forest of Elond, home to the evil wizard Malkil. Guide the warrior Kuros through seven levels of adventure as he tries to free the princess from Malkil's Castle IronSpire. Use the magic sword to battle monsters, killer insects, and the undead (among others). Acclaim, for NES.

☆ **Wonder Boy III: The Dragon's Trap** is an excellent sequel to the earlier *Wonder Boy* adventures. It actually starts before the previous game leaves off by restaging your fight with the MEKA dragon. You win, but the dying dragon turns you into Lizard-Man, and you spend the rest of the game trying to restore your original form. *Wonder Boy III* is more flexible and sophisticated than its predecessors, allowing you to find your own path to victory. Sega, for Sega.

Wrestlemania is mainly for wrestling fans. If you like the idea of portraying pro wrestlers such as Hulk Hogan, Andre the Giant, or Bam Bam Bigelow, you'll probably love *Wrestlemania*. It offers colorful characters and solid ring action. Unless you're playing a friend, however, the game can get a bit tedious. Acclaim, for NES.

Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders allows you to become a top journalist for the *National Inquirer*. Journey to Egypt, the Bermuda Triangle, Mars, and other exotic locales in your attempt

to stop aliens from turning the population into idiots via the telephone company. Lots of puzzles and fun. LucasFilm, for PC, Apple II, 64.

☆ **Zany Golf** is a computer sports game that doesn't strive for realism. Instead, it creates a nine-hole miniature golf course with such improbable hazards as hamburgers that hover, fans that blow your ball off target, and fairways that flout the law of gravity. Beautifully animated graphics and a toe-tapping musical score make this a unique and entertaining sports game. Electronic Arts, for Amiga, PC, iIGS, ST.

Zelda II: The Adventures of Link is the sequel to the super Nintendo hit, *The Legend of Zelda*. You'll be amazed at the depth and challenge of this immense, rich adventure game. As Link, you must once again fight the powers of darkness in the land of Hyrule. Room from the North Castle to Death Mountain...and beyond. Nintendo of America, for NES.

GP

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Kimberly Nash

Kimberly Nash, 13, of Greensboro, North Carolina, prefers adventure games over arcade action on her Nintendo system. Her current favorite is *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link* because of its magical powers, large number of locations to map, and puzzles to solve. *Super Mario Bros.*, with its humorous situations, is another game she enjoys. In school, Kimberly's favorite subject is science, and she hopes someday to become a cardiologist. She also likes sports and plays both softball and soccer.

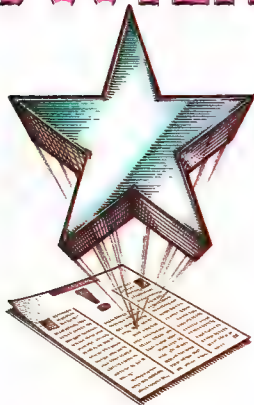


John Roberts

John Roberts, 14, of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, enjoys a wide range of Nintendo games, including *Super Mario Bros. 2*, *Road Racer*, and *Seicross*, but his current favorite is *The Adventures of Bayou Billy*. Because of the variety of action and sense of humor in *Bayou Billy*, John says it's a game he doesn't easily tire of. He's also looking forward to *Goal!*, because he plays league soccer in his spare time. John's favorite school subject is computer science, and he also likes building models and scouting.

GP

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(Computer games with more than 250,000 copies sold, as certified by the Software Publishers Association; includes only participating member companies. Listed in alphabetical order.)

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Where in the USA Is Carmen Sandiego? Broderbund
Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego? Broderbund

READERS' POLL: NINTENDO

(Alphabetical order)

Blades of Steel
Blaster Master
Castlevania
Castlevania II: Simon's Quest
Gauntlet
Metal Gear
Metroid
Ninja Gaiden
Super Mario Bros. 2
Track and Field II
Zelda II: The Adventure of Link

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(Provided by the Babbage's chain of software stores.)

1. *Curse of the Azure Bonds* (SSI)
2. *The Duel: Test Drive II* (Accolade)
3. *Pool of Radiance* (SSI)
4. *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* (Broderbund)
5. *Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Golf* (Accolade)
6. *Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?* (Broderbund)
7. *Where in the USA Is Carmen Sandiego?* (Broderbund)
8. *Red Storm Rising* (MicroProse)
9. *688 Attack Sub* (Electronic Arts)
10. *King's Quest IV* (Sierra)

READERS' POLL: SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

(Alphabetical order)

After Burner
Altered Beast
Double Dragon
Golvellius:
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Shinobi
Y's: The Vanished Omens

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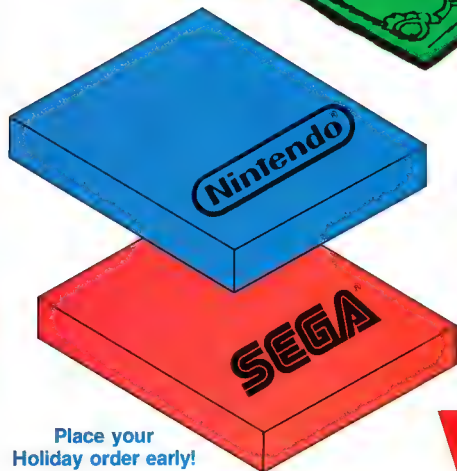
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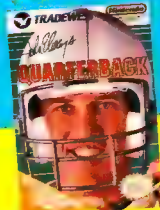
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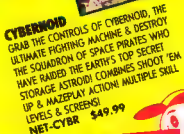
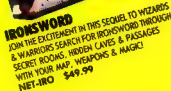
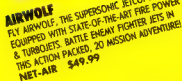
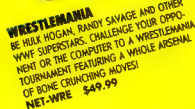
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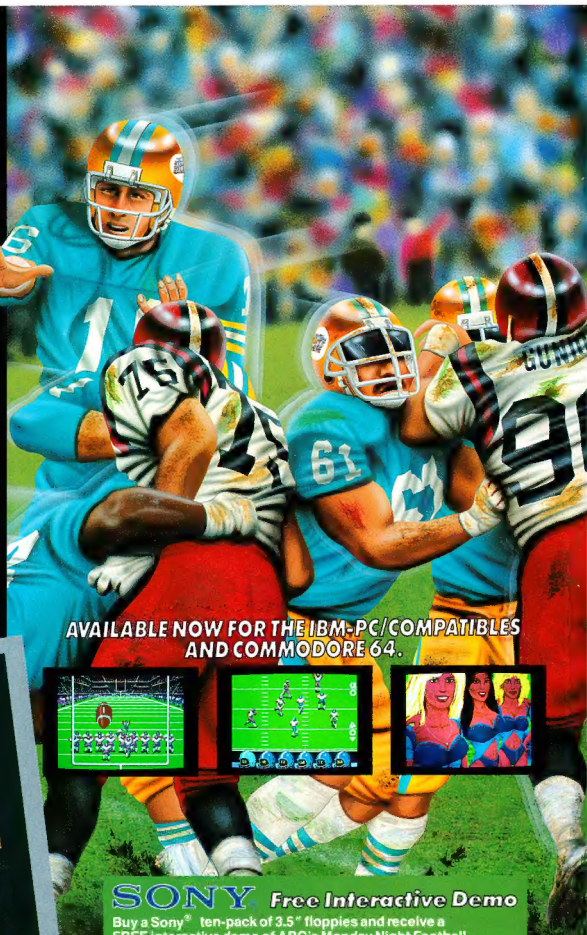
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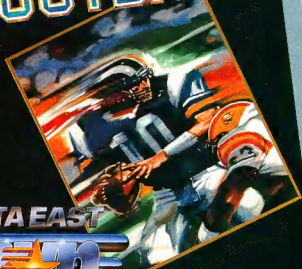
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